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Further Reportage, Commentary on CIS Summit

Kuchma Cited on Agenda

LD2605160095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1408 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minsk, May 26 (INTERFAX-WEST) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma said on Thursday [25 May] that he was willing to meet his Russian counterpart, Boris Yeltsin, in Minsk.

"I will meet the president of Russia, Boris Yeltsin, with pleasure, if time allows me to. I made such an agreement with him on May 9 in Moscow," Kuchma told reporters after he arrived in the Belarusian capital to take part in Friday's summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Talking about the issue of the Black Sea Fleet, the president said he had stated his position on it in a letter sent to Yeltsin earlier. "It seems to me I accurately set out the problems and dotted all the i's," he said.

Asked what his reaction would be if the Ukrainian parliament decided to call a referendum on closer integration with Russia similar to a recent one in Belarus, Kuchma replied he had "always had respect for the will of the people."

"I have always stood for deep economic integration," he added. "That is what we should focus on. It won't do anyone any good if the Commonwealth heads of state deal with political questions alone."

Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, who welcomed Kuchma at the airport, said that, if such referendums had been held in other CIS states, "including Ukraine," "not 87 but all of 99 percent" would have voted in favor of integration.

Kuchma said, however, that he would not sign a treaty on the joint protection of the Commonwealth's "external borders." "There are no external borders in the CIS. What there is are the borders of each independent state," he explained.

The treaty was to be signed on Friday by the heads of seven CIS states, it was reported in Minsk earlier.

Yeltsin-Kuchma Talks Described

LD2705002095 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2050 GMT 26 May 95

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Anatoliy Grigoryev for TASS]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev, 27 May — "We only signed those documents which met Ukrainian interests," Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma told journalists on Friday [26 May]. He was speaking on the tarmac at Minsk Airport before he left for Kiev after the summit of CIS heads of state and heads of government that was held in the Belarusian capital. He stressed that the summit marked a breakthrough in that the priority had been economic and not political or military issues.

The Ukrainian president said that he had a "very good, quite lengthy conversation" with Russian President Boris Yeltsin during the summit. The presidents agreed to meet on 9 June in Sochi in order to make a final decision on the fate of the Black Sea Fleet. "We need a solution because this has already roused so much speculation," Leonid Kuchma said. I am convinced, he continued, that the Russian president is not always aware of Ukrainian proposals on this problem. "The military cannot agree so it is up to the politicians to come to an agreement. We must be guided by the interests of both Ukraine and Russia," the Ukrainian head of state stressed.

On the subject of customs relations, Leonid Kuchma said that he feared "all the problems that pulling down customs posts might bring." This is a lengthy process, he said. I have always supported and I still support integration but the interests of each state must be considered, Leonid Kuchma stressed. To set up a customs union you must have identical laws. Today we are also concerned about migration and smuggling. We intend to go on actively conducting our own foreign policy and setting up foreign economic links, the Ukrainian president said.

Leonid Kuchma also said that he intends to visit Uzbekistan in the near future with the agreement of President Islam Karimov.

Rakhmanov Urged To Share Power

LD2605164195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1547 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minsk, May 26 (INTERFAX) — President Islam Karimov, of Uzbekistan, is reported to have urged his Tajik counterpart Emomali Rakhmanov to share power with the opposition. He was speaking in the course of debates behind closed doors at the CIS summit in Minsk on Friday.

President Karimov appreciated military and material efforts by Russia aimed at stabilizing the situation in Tajikistan. However, he said that the prolonged Tajik conflict must not last much longer.

President Karimov advised President Rakhmanov to enter into a political dialogue with the opposition. He said he had discussed the Tajik problem with the Kazakh

President Nursultan Nazarbayev and was speaking on his own behalf, too.

President Askar Akayev, of Kyrgyzstan, and the Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, who chaired the meeting, are reported to have supported President Karimov.

President Rakhmanov said in reply that he was the constitutional leader of an independent country elected by its people and that Tajikistan would not tolerate any outside pressure.

Yeltsin Satisfied With Results

LD2605115995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1105 GMT 26 May 95

[Special ITAR-TASS report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minsk, 26 May — Boris Yeltsin has expressed satisfaction with the results of the meeting of heads of state and governments of the CIS. Speaking at the plenary meeting that concludes the meeting, Russia's president said: "I believe that all sessions passed off very efficiently. During half a day we decided some 15 issues."

He said that Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan are intensively studying the legal, economic, and organizational aspects of a customs union. During this, elements of a new mechanism for a single customs space are emerging.

If one is to speak in earnest about integration, the Russian president said, the formation of a currency union must not be shelved indefinitely. It is also time to think of the prospects for moving on to a joint currency. In Russia, the exchange rate of the ruble has started to rise and we are hoping for financial stabilization by the end of the year, Boris Yeltsin stressed.

Chernomyrdin 'Very Satisfied'

LD2605132495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1309 GMT 26 May 95

[By Andrey Urban]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, May 26 (Itar-Tass) — Commonwealth member-states have progressed in their economic cooperation, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said here today commenting on the Minsk Commonwealth summit results.

"I am very satisfied with the meeting of the CIS Government Heads," Chernomyrdin told correspondents. In his words, "the meeting has settled almost all problems, including the Elabuga issue and the concept of the customs union."

Lukashenka, Chernomyrdin News Conference

LD2605221595 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1645 GMT 26 May 95

[News conference by Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, conducted by CIS Coordinating Committee Secretary Ivan Karatchenya, on the results of the summit of CIS heads of state and government in Minsk on 26 May — recorded; participants speak in Russian]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Lukashenka] I would like to tell you, absolutely sincerely and openly, about the meeting of the heads of state which was held behind closed doors.

On the first item on the agenda discussed by the Interstate Currency Committee, as I have already said, you were present at the plenary sitting when the issue was approved.

At the beginning we discussed one organizational issue, in a very tough and principled way, moreover. In general we assessed each other and each other's position in the CIS. I mean the heads of state here. Unfortunately a decision was made not to make public the results of the discussion and therefore I cannot give you the details.

We also ratified the CIS convention on human rights and basic freedoms: six voted in favor and six against. We agreed that those who support the convention now should sign it now; if tomorrow or the day after tomorrow other states are ready to support it, they will join later and sign the convention. Admittedly, there was a thorough discussion as to whether this convention was needed at all, bearing in mind that there is the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and perhaps we should not sign this convention. But I have already told you how the issue was resolved. Seven [as heard] voted in favor and the convention of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS member states was passed, albeit after a long debate.

Also, the blueprint on the protection of the state borders of CIS member states and the relevant treaty were adopted today: seven voted in favor; Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and several other states voted against the treaty.

As for extending the presence of the collective peacekeeping forces in the Republic of Tajikistan, I must be honest with you: at our last summit Emomali Rakhmanov was criticized for slowing down the settlement of this difficult problem. One must say that the president of the Russian Federation took a very tough position; he was concerned with the fact that, above all, Russian lads are being killed there and he was very tough on the matter.

The decision was made to extend the presence of the collective peacekeeping forces in Tajikistan. Also, at the request of Eduard Shevardnadze, head of the Georgian state, the presence of the collective peacekeeping forces to settle the conflict in Abkhazia was extended.

As you have heard already, we adopted item seven on the procedure for awarding the citizens of the CIS member states the Zhukov Medal (?Order). By doing this, we showed respect to the veterans of the Great Patriotic War in the year of the 50th anniversary of the victory.

We also adopted an agreement on transportation of special military cargoes.

All the above were peaceful issues, so to speak. Oh yes, there was another issue — you are most likely to ask me a question about this — Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev came forward with a new initiative to simplify the procedure for receiving citizenship for the citizens of the CIS member states. The heads of state decided, however, that this is a matter of bilateral relations between states and did not support the initiative.

The second group of questions — very briefly — were issues relating to the Collective Security Council [CSC]. Five issues were adopted: on extending the general secretary's period in office, on registering the Collective Security Treaty, on the CSC procedural rules, on the plan of the implementation of the collective security blueprint, and on the stamp of the CSC secretariat and headed paper of the council's general secretary. These issues were approved, they were considered, and decisions were made.

As for the position of the CSC secretariat, the organizational and personnel structure of the CSC secretariat, the financing of the CSC and its bodies, and the draft agreement between the CSC general secretary and the Russian Government on the conditions of the CSC's presence on Russian territory, these issues were not resolved at the present meeting. Moreover, the last two issues I have mentioned were not supported even by the heads of government [words indistinct].

So, dear comrade journalists, I have told you in brief about the agenda of the meeting of the CIS heads of state. All I can add in conclusion of my brief address is that, according to the decision of the heads of state, the next meeting will take place on 3 November on the territory of the Russian Federation in Sochi. [passage omitted: Karatchenya thanks Lukashenka and invites journalists to begin their questions]

[Kuleba] I have a question for Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin and Alyaksandr Grigoryevich Lukashenka. Vladimir Kuleba, editor in chief of the Ukrainian NEZAVISIMOST newspaper. You know that Chernobyl is a huge catastrophe for us in Ukraine, and you, Viktor Stepanovich, know that Chernobyl [word indistinct] the whole Union. Now, unfortunately, Kiev has been left to deal with the sarcophagus on its own. [passage indistinct]

[Lukashenka] My dear Vladimir, I would like to make a little comment before answering your question. It is not only Kiev that has been left to deal with the sarcophagus alone. Belarus has also been left alone with the problems of Chernobyl, unfortunately. Besides the Russian Federation no one is helping to minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster on our territory. As you know, 30 percent of our territory is polluted with [words indistinct]. You are absolutely right. I support the chairman of the Russian Government in saying that today we have to unite in, if you will allow the old terminology, the struggle against misfortune, and coordinate our actions, including in the international arena. We simply forget at times that Chernobyl is a very serious problem and it will rear its head again. As regards assistance, of course there is not the sort of help that we would like, but [words indistinct] the Russian Federation, which has unfrozen certain currency funds in the Russian Vneshekonombank [words indistinct] and is helping us to build a surgery in Gomel which will accept Belarusians, Russians, and Ukrainians for treatment. It's huge. We need to finish it. It is to these specific instances that we need first of all to direct our attention. Thank you.

[Karatchenya] Thank you Alyaksandr Grigoryevich. Question from the second microphone please.

[Zinkovich] INTERFAX, Zinkovich. Alyaksandr Grigoryevich, please tell us whether in the course of the summit talks you felt the effect of the referendum in Belarus, and do you think it had an effect on policy in the CIS? Please allow me a second question, for information: it had been said that a few changes will take place on the Russia-Belarus border it two or three hours. Does this mean that the so-called digging up the border post ceremony will take place in two or three hours, or will it be tomorrow, or when?

[Lukashenka] [passage indistinct] As regards your first question — forgive me for answering them out of order — you are absolutely right, you could feel the effect of the referendum, very strongly in fact. Unfortunately you were not at the end of the plenary session. If you had been there you would have heard the speech by the Russian president. In the name of the heads of state, he, as chairman of the council of heads of state, summed up the results of the referendum, and the mood for reintegration has got significantly stronger. [words indistinct] This is our common victory as Russians [rossiyanami] and I am very happy with this victory. Thank you.

[Karatchenya] Fourth microphone please.

[Unidentified correspondent] Thank you. Radio Rossii information service, [name indistinct]. From [words indistinct] information we have learned that (?let us say) [passage indistinct] friction over the issue of the extension of the powers of the peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia. Could you elucidate the situation for us, and what you agreed on in general? Thank you.

[Karatchenya] I can tell you officially that there was no friction over this conflict, and in general this issue was discussed very briefly. [passage indistinct]

[Lukashenka] We're not right — you're not right — we would not be entirely correct if we just said it like that. I must draw your attention to another statement made during the discussion, a statement by the Russian president on the issue of Abkhazia. I quote verbatim. He said the following — I think this is very important. Incidentally, we agreed that we are extending, it's not in the minutes but we are extending the periods for the presence of armed forces there for the last time. Boris Nikolayevich said: I, as president of the Russian Federation, cannot calmly watch us shipping coffins to Russia. Our people must not be killed there any more. So, dear friends and comrades, take all measures necessary to stabilize the situation there. Russia will help, has helped, and will help, but Russia must be understood as well. That was the statement, in that vein. It was discussed briefly, the issue really was discussed very briefly.

[Karatchenya] Thank you, Alyaksandr Grigoryevich. Fifth microphone. [passage indistinct]

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Lukashenka, could you tell us, on the convention on human rights [passage indistinct] who was against, who voted against this convention? And a question for Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin: In [words indistinct] it says that the issue of regulating interstate settlements for the results of the trade and economic agreements of (?1993-94) may be discussed. What is this, cancelling debts? Does Russia pay for all the CIS states, or what? Please explain. Thank you.

[Lukashenka] As regards your question on the CIS convention on human rights and fundamental freedoms, there have unfortunately been attempts to link the adoption of this convention with the recent statement by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, a well-known statement, as journalists know, that we will defend the interests of the Russian-speaking population [words indistinct] in any part of the world by any means possible. That was roughly what he said. There was an attempt by some leaders to link this statement with the adoption of this convention, in response to which Foreign Minister Kozyrev gave exhaustive explanations and answers. It was proved that this issue should not be linked with the statement, and Kozyrev explained what he had in mind when he said what he did then. I can name a few who voted against: Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, (?six in all), but I do not want to point at specific states, because as you well understand it often happens that a head of state votes for, but doesn't sign the document, so we can give you further information after the signing, who signed it and who didn't. That's when you can see who is for and who is against.

[Karatchenya] The convention is [word indistinct], and is ready, can be ready for signing at any time, as soon as the states choose to do so. [passage indistinct]

[Lukashenka] As regards your question, I would like to refer to the statements made today by a number of leaders of CIS states to the effect that they are prepared to take the same step taken by Belarus and Russia. Proof of this was the eloquent statement made by Islam Abdughaniyevich Karimov.

Furthermore, I would like to inform you that I have had a two-hour meeting with the president of Ukraine, our brother republic, and I have to say that this talk of Ukraine being actively in favor of breaking up the CIS just isn't true.

Incidentally, we are going to meet the Ukrainian president to sign a major agreement identical to the one we signed with the Russian Federation. Furthermore, Ukraine is, as it has already said, willing to conduct negotiations to try to find common ground in the area of economic integration, which is what we have always said. There is absolutely no question of either Belarus or Ukraine losing sovereignty, nor does Russia require anything of the sort.

[Passage omitted: Correspondent asks if the CIS Councils of Heads of State and Government will take more effective action on important issues than it has previously]

[Chernomyrdin] In his closing speech at the joint meeting here Boris Nikolayevich stressed the importance of the work of the Intergovernmental Economic Committee and its role as far as further integration is concerned, as well as the importance of the other CIS bodies which must now enter a completely new phase in the process.

[Lukashenka] As I have already told you, this question [word indistinct] at the closed meeting. And when I told you that we agreed not to release it through the mass media, we touched upon elements of this question and the question was, as we have said, handled dynamically with the active involvement of the heads of state in the process. We discussed this question, but the important thing is that we are meeting and that prevents any vast divergence in our positions. The Belarusian referendum, the speech by the Russian president, and the statements of the heads of the states are evidence that integration will grow stronger. Therefore that is also a positive factor.

[Passage omitted: Correspondent asks if a customs union between Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan was discussed at the CIS summit]

[Chernomyrdin] Yes, we discussed that question. The fact is that the time for discussion is past — it's now just a matter of making a decision and acting upon it. Well, work is under way with regard to Kazakhstan and the leaders of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have expressed their desire to join too.

[Lukashenka] This question was not discussed at the meeting of heads of state today. I agree with Viktor Stepanovich that it is no longer a matter for discussion. We have the drafts, we have the documents — the only thing needed is political will on the part of the leaders. If the will is there there won't be any problem.

[Chernomyrdin] The president of Kyrgyzstan spoke eloquently about this political will at the airport. He said: Yes, we are willing to sign our entry into a customs union.

[Unidentified correspondent] What is the attitude of the Russian Federation [words indistinct] Russian peacemaking forces in Bosnia?

[Chernomyrdin] [Words indistinct] bomb strikes, that is, when conflicts come to such [word indistinct], one cannot expect anything good to come out of it. Wherever they take place. I can say that. Everywhere [words indistinct]. I can only maybe add that we have spoken to the leaders of both sides, effectively with all the republics, Bosnians, Serbs, and all the others so that they will stop and not let it turn into, one should not let it come to bomb strikes, it would be [words indistinct].

[Karatchenya] Thank you, Viktor Stepanovich, the third microphone.

[Unidentified correspondent] [Words indistinct] political questions prevailed over economic ones at the (?two) last (?meetings), does it mean that the heads of CIS countries have not yet made specific plans and programs for economic cooperation and in particular no decision has been made on the interstate monetary committee. Could you (?decipher) whether there is some contingency plan for creation of and the stages of creation of this single monetary union? In this connection what is the position of Ukraine, both on the customs union and the monetary union?

[Chernomyrdin] Speaking about the prospects for creation and effectiveness of the agreements which are being concluded, it is not a simple question. On the issue of whether politics or economics prevail in our activities, in the work that we are doing today both in the economic line and in the political line I can tell you unambiguously that, if adequate economic decisions are made, economics influence politics in many aspects. I think that our CIS moves faster in many positions in the political issues too because economic solutions are found. I am convinced of that. It is not my (?theory) [words indistinct], it has been in use for a long time, it is being used now. It is bad that it is not [words indistinct] anywhere.

As for the monetary union, that is, the documents which have been signed and our plans, I can say — and not just regarding the monetary union, a roble one, and all others too — we are a normal civilized integration. We will do everything in order to arrive at these decisions faster. [Words indistinct] customs union. One needs political will and nothing else.

[Lukashenka] Answering your question, Pavel, I would like to say that the document on an interstate monetary committee which has been signed, the one we have been talking about and discussing, this document is more of a conceptual nature than intended for immediate practical implementation. It is more of a strategic document which outlines general issues of the setting up of an interstate monetary union. I must say that specific drafts [words indistinct] we and the Russian Federation have signed an agreement, as you know, on a payment union. It belongs to the framework of this interstate monetary union although it was concluded and signed earlier. You know that too.

As for the first part of your question — that is, the prevalance on the agenda of political and military issues — you are absolutely right in that the subtext of your question should contain some reproach. You are probably absolutely right in this question. I have just said this in my final speech at the plenary sitting that we will achieve little if the agenda does not include at the top three or four [words indistinct] economic issues and problems and after that — political and military issues because, forgive me for my frankness, a question always arises when we talk about creation of collective and other military forces, many people ask: to defend what, what interests? These interests, first of all, lie in the economic sphere and in people's lives. Therefore you are absolutely right, Pavel, economic issues and economics should be placed at the top. Today we agreed that the Interstate Economic Committee will work more effectively; it has already been set up and it will deal in a more urgent manner with topical economic issues. Thank you.

[Karatchenya] First microphone, please.

[Unidentified SEGODNYA correspondent] The SEGODNYA newspaper. Viktor Stepanovich, [words indistinct] the customs union is not just a symbolic (?agreement) on a joint border but an agreement that imposes many commitments on its signatories. [passage indistinct] Could you please say what one of the sides would do if it is not satisfied with [words indistinct] of the other side? In other words, could there be a situation in which these border posts would have to be put back?

[Chernomyrdin] We will try not to allow this. We have just done something and you already want us to destroy it. I do not think that we have spent three years to do just that. [Words indistinct] set up this customs union. Enormous work lies behind these two words. First of all, legislation should coincide — a great deal of work was done in this field: laws, normative documents, normative conditions — an enormous package of documents.

To make it clearer for your readers, after we signed the customs union with Belarus, we started talks with Kazakhstan. [Words indistinct] six months. This is not because either Kazakhstan or Russia do not want this. This is not [passage indistinct] do not coincide. It will take at least 10 months to bring everything in accordance. This is the work that lies ahead. This is what is behind it.

To answer the second part of your question, there may be problems, there may be questions. This is life, these are life's problems. That's why there are governments, there are heads of state to resolve them. But to go back to square one, no, enough is enough. We will not do that. As long as we are here.

[Karatchenya] Thank you, Viktor Stepanovich. Third microphone, your question, please.

[Parfenov] Belarusian radio, Dmitriy Parfenov. I have the following question: was the problem of, how shall I put it, reunification of the Belarusian and Russian Armed Forces raised at today's meeting? In general, was such a prospect discussed?

[Karatchenya] No, it was not. First microphone, please.

[Lukashenka] I do apologize, although we did not discuss the issue in this context, however we did discuss several military problems. To give you an idea of what problems we discussed, I must tell you that the heads of state are ready to cooperate in the military sphere but, for the time being, not by uniting the armed forces of all the states but region by region. In other words, if Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine have their military strategic and military political interests in the western region, the leaders of these states and their armed forces are likely to find understanding and points of contact sooner rather than later. Do you understand what I am saying? The solution was found at regional level. I think this is a great progress and a great success and it should be consolidated. This includes the air defense troops — they were the first — and now this already includes other branches of troops, ground troops among others.

[Chernomyrdin] And border troops.

[Lukashenka] And border troops.

[Vyatskaya] Thank you. Mir TV and radio company, Tamara Vyatskaya. Mr. Chernomyrdin, as we know Russia of course plays first violin in the CIS. Has anything happened at this forum which was unexpected for you? That's the first question. The second is, have you been able to review the development of the Mir international TV and radio company? Thank you.

[Chernomyrdin] There was nothing wildly unexpected, at least for me, bearing in mind that I am the oldest of the leaders of the former Union, so no. The only thing that [word indistinct] me is that we have begun to move forward more successfully. The suggestions that have arisen recently that we are marking time, that — no, we're not marking time. Not any more, nor will we be marking time. As regards the Mir TV company, we discussed it, discussed the draft charter which was submitted, and decided to look at everything, and [passage indistinct] organized, which was headed today by Sergey Mikhailovich Shakhray, submit to this commission. To bring it to fruition everything has to be thought through. It's a very important TV company for our countries, and a decision will be made in the near future, at the [word indistinct] meeting of the commission, or at least at the following meeting; this will be one of the decisions to be made. [words indistinct]

[Lukashenka] If I may, I would just like to add a few words on the Mir company, regarding the position of the Belarusian side. I have charged my government with agreeing to and supporting this TV and radio company, including with finance. [passage omitted: Lukashenka says he is however unsatisfied with the airtime allocated to Mir; Chernomyrdin answers question on poor quality alcohol]

[Karatchenya] Are there more questions? I can't see any.

[Unidentified correspondent] I wanted to add...

[Chernomyrdin, interrupting] You will do it later. Let that girl ask her question.

[Correspondent] Irina [last name indistinct], the World TV [words indistinct]. A question for Mr. Chernomyrdin and Mr. Lukashenka. Could you please say whether the present summit and the previous summit in Almaty are, excuse me, just nostalgia for the former Soviet Union? This is the first question. The second, in your opinion, is it possible that the CIS states will unite in the future on the same basis as the former Soviet Union?

[Chernomyrdin] I must say that I personally do feel a nostalgia for those old contacts and not only for the contacts but for getting together and solving this backlog of problems that have now accumulated among our states. This is the first thing.

As for the union, I believe there will be a union on a normal basis and in a civilized framework, based on normal economic principles and market relations. This has never done any harm to anyone and never will. Now no one anywhere thinks or dreams of, as in our former Soviet Union, encroaching upon anyone's sovereignty. There is no need for this now. No one, however, will stop us from uniting within a normal and civilized framework. I am convinced of that. And I will be happy. I am happy today to see what is happening between Russia and Belarus. It has taken us three years. I think this process will continue. [five-second break in transmission]

[Lukashenka] I was not a leader in the Soviet Union — neither a big one nor a small one — therefore I have no nostalgia. But probably you know my position; I feel very strongly about the disintegration of what was a great power in the past. Some of you here might not like this but this is true. Therefore, if one can describe this as a nostalgia, then Lukashenka does feel it.

As for the second part of your question about going back to the former Soviet Union, this is simply not realistic and no one, except you, Irina, is raising this question any more. [laughter]

[Karatchenya] Thank you. We only have time for the last question.

[Lukashenka] Have we run out of time?

[Karatchenya] I cannot see more questions. Thank you all very much for attending this news conference. I wish you every success for the future.

Border Protection Documents Signed

LD2605120795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1148 GMT 26 May 95

[By Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, May 26 (Itar-Tass) — Seven out of the twelve countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) signed documents on the protection of external borders of the CIS in Minsk on Friday. Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan have not signed the treaty so far, Itar-Tass was told by General Andrey Nikolayev, Chairman of the Council of Frontier Troops Commanders of CIS countries, director of Russia's Federal Frontier Service.

Nikolayev believes these states may joint the treaty as they get prepared to fulfil obligations for the protection of external borders of the CIS envisaged by the treaty.

Leaders Approve Further Agreements

LD2605141995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1250 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, May 26 (Interfax) — CIS leaders ended a Friday summit talks in Minsk by approving the agreement on a regional currency committee proposed by Russia. The meeting was chaired by Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka.

They also approved one other proposal by Moscow outlining the procedure for conferring Zhukov orders and war medals to veterans residing in other CIS states. Russia is has committed to sustain the manufacturing cost.

One other agreement on shipment of special and military-related cargoes was approved after Armenia and Azerbaijan withdrew their reservations.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin summed up the results of the Minsk forum and Interfax will give a synopsis of his speech later.

After insistent requests, journalists were allowed to stay on and witness the decision-making mechanism used by CIS leaders for the first time in the history of CIS summits.

Abkhazia Peacekeepers' Mandate Extended

LD2605164695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1555 GMT 26 May 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature, by diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, May 26 (Interfax-West) — The CIS summit in Minsk has passed a unanimous decision to extend the mandate of the peacekeeping force in Abkhazia until December 31, 1955, as requested by Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze.

Next Summit 3 Nov in Sochi

LD2605144695 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1255 GMT 26 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minsk, 26 May — The next session of the Council of CIS Heads of State and Government will be held on 3 November in Sochi. This decision was made at the meeting of Commonwealth leaders that ended here today, Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka announced at the final news conference.

PRAVDA Sees 'Serious Conflicts'

MM2905135295 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 27 May 95 p 1

[Report by Oleg Stepanenko: "Fragments Scatter Further and Further Apart. Our Correspondent Reports From CIS Heads of State Meeting in Minsk"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As expected the latest, 17th, meeting of CIS states' leaders yielded nothing extraordinary. "Few questions regarding economic integration but more problems associated with acute problems in 'hot spots'" — Uzbek leader I. Karimov complained. While Belarusian President A. Lukashenka put it much more bluntly: "The CIS has started dealing with things of secondary rather than prime importance.... We must start with economics." In Lukashenka's opinion this will help to "unravel" all the other knots.

It is indeed a paradox: The Union's national economic complex, which was torn to pieces and which only recently was very powerful, is collapsing, one by one the economies of every "sovereign" fragment of the great power are perishing, turning into colonial economies, forcibly divided peoples are becoming paupers, yet the heads of state found the time to submit just one economic question for their consideration — on forming an interstate currency committee which is to strangle the hydra of nonpayments and lay the foundation of a future payments union. Analysts noticed that what is being talked about is the improvement of individual currencies and this, even compared to the Belovezhskaya agreements, which envisaged a single monetary area, is a giant step back. No wonder Ukrainian President L. Kuchma went to the conference of heads of state only as an observer. Yet again Kazakhstani President N. Nazarbayev fell ill immediately prior to the summit meeting. This illness, many people are convinced, is no accident: Nazarbayev was expressing his attitude toward the failure to adopt the Eurasian Union idea proposed by him, which did not receive support from the CIS heads.

Following the Minsk meeting we can talk of serious conflicts in the Commonwealth. They openly manifested themselves, for example, during consideration of the concept of and the treaty on border protection. Ukrainian representatives believe that Ukraine's border, irrespective of whether it is with a country that belongs or does not belong to the Commonwealth, must be regarded as Ukraine's state border. Moldova, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan refused to sign the treaty. The mandate of peacekeeping forces in Tajikistan and Abkhazia was extended.

But the most alarming thing is this: CIS summits are increasingly turning into a fire brigade which tries to extinguish the bloody conflicts flaring up in CIS "hot spots." Of course, measures must be taken to end the fratricidal wars. One can understand the Tajiks who, according to Tajik delegation member Professor R. Mirzoyev, are seeking peace for their country in Minsk. The CIS' political clout is sufficient to help his native country put an end to the civil war and to the opposition of groups struggling for power. But the ambiguous maneuvers of certain Central Asian presidents are jeopardizing an intra-Tajik truce.

Following the Minsk conference it is already clear that most leaders of "sovereign" fragments of the great country are merely supporting the outward appearance of rapprochement and integration so as not to lose face in the eyes of the common people.

IZVESTIYA Views Summit Results

MM3005101695 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 30 May 95 p 2

[Article by Aleksey Portanskiy: "No Sensations at Minsk Summit If You Discount the Demolition of the Border Post"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As expected there were no epoch-making integrationist events during the CIS summit late last week in Minsk if you discount the ceremonial demolition of the border post symbolizing the removal of the state and customs border between Russia and Belarus. The following provided convincing evidence of the absence of perceptible constructive decisions during the meeting: By midday 29 May neither the Russian Ministry for Cooperation With the CIS Countries nor the Foreign Ministry clearly knew which documents had been signed in Minsk three days earlier.

It can be said with a fair degree of certainty that the summit participants voted unanimously in favor of extending the peacekeeping forces' sojourn in Tajikistan and Abkhazia.

The question of a unified border security system has not been fully resolved — only Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan do not clash on this issue. The other republics (Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan) are either still pondering this question or are not ready to sign the document owing to territorial disputes and the existence of "hot" spots on their territory.

For the same reason — conflict zones — a number of republics were unable to agree to the proposed Convention on Human Rights since they simply cannot as yet guarantee their observance. What is more, many of our CIS partners have become somewhat suspicious about this because of Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev's recent statement about defending the interests of the Russian-speaking population in the near abroad by any means available. The upshot is that opinion was divided: Some people proposed adopting a declaration instead of a convention, others proposed waiting, and others still proposed gradually subscribing to the UN Convention on Human Rights one at time.

As for steps or attempted steps toward economic integration IZVESTIYA has already commented on certain negative consequences of the removal of the customs barrier between Russia and Belarus (see No. 95). This is what Andrey Illarionov, director of the Economic Analysis Institute, said about this at our request:

Virtually everything that has happened to date between Russia and the republics of the former USSR on so-called unification, be it the creation of a single ruble zone, monetary union, or the removal of the customs border, deals a really or potentially significant blow to the Russian economy.

No one calculated how much Russian unification with Belarus — which has not so far happened, thank God — might cost. Now as a result of the unification of the customs area Russia is threatened with losing trillions of rubles as a result of losing control over the movement of goods across the Belarusian border with Ukraine and the Baltic countries. The creation of a Customs Union involving Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan will create difficult problems for the individual participants on the international arena.

There are fairly strict criteria for the beginning of economic integration, Illarionov stressed, which right now are fairly weak within the CIS framework if only because of the considerable discrepancy when it comes to the implementation of economic reforms in the individual republics. Integration within the Commonwealth is now being boosted by leaders' political ambitions rather than by economic factors.

Daily Views Events at Summit

MM2905134195 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 27 May 95 p 1

[Article by Candidate of Economic Sciences Oleg Cherkovets: "Belovezhskaya Blockheads"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Hardly anyone remembers in the three-and-a-half years' existence of the quasicommonwealth called the CIS another meeting of the heads of state and government (or "summit," to use a fashionable expression) that was almost effectively scuppered by some of these leaders themselves. One of the "pillars" of the CIS, Kazakhstani President Nazarbayev, suddenly "caught a cold," while Shevardnadze at first was said to be needed at home — for a holiday celebration. Yet in the exceptionally uncertain situation Shevardnadze depends on the CIS and on B. Yeltsin personally, the only remaining member of the three "founding fathers," almost more than any of the others. It was only a matter of hours before the meeting started that Shevardnadze "relented" and modified his schedule.

As the Russian president says in such situations, "that, you understand, is the trouble." And no routine smiles, numerous speeches about economic or monetary union, or signatures on documents, which, as has already happened in the history of this organization, will not really work — nothing can camouflage the problems any longer. But that is just half the trouble. The trouble came from under their very noses — from the banks of the Dnepr.

Literally on the eve of the "summit" reports came from Kiev that the Ukrainian delegation would take part in the meeting in Minsk with..."observer status," although, unlike Kazakhstan, it would be led by the republic's president. It was not just any "peripheral" CIS country but one of the main "founders" so to speak that was putting a spanner in the CIS works. What does this formula mean for the Commonwealth today and tomorrow?

At first glance it seems somewhat phantasmagorical that it was not the destroyer-"democrat" Kravchuk but President Kuchma, elected a year ago atop the slogan of all-around cooperation with Russia, notably within the CIS, who tried to make this move vis-a-vis the CIS. Last July, could anyone have imagined anything of the kind? And Kuchma's ostentatious bowing and scraping — not just anywhere but in Riga — regarding Ukraine's possible membership of NATO will hardly do him any favors.

But does the blame lie solely with Kuchma, who has begun to act increasingly overtly (not only with regard to the CIS but also on domestic policy and foreign economic issues) against the stance espoused by most of his republic's population, against the main regions of Ukraine which ensured his victory in last summer's presidential elections and, on the contrary, in favor of those Western oblasts which constitute a large but rabid Catholic minority and which a year ago slung mud at him while foaming at the mouth? Has the policy pursued by Yeltsin himself toward Ukraine not provoked something of the kind? How was it possible to contrive for years (!) not to settle effectively a single (!!) major military-strategic and political question in Russia's favor despite the fact that Ukraine is continuing to pile up debts to Russia with virtually every month that passes?

Perhaps this is payment for involvement in the Belovezhskaya crime? Why be surprised then if Kiev has simply gotten accustomed to the Moscow bear voluntarily raising its paw of its own accord (!) on every issue. That is quite logical. But something else is illogical or, to be more precise, absurd. Despite these slaps in the face from Kiev, Almaty, and Tbilisi, the day before the "summit" Yeltsin demonstrated splendidly during an Ostankino TV interview what he is afraid of.

It transpires that he thinks that the unified state cannot be restored because "we do not have a CPSU — a leading, directing force." I thank those people who wrote Yeltsin's answers for this television broadcast! The whole world now is aware that the president of Russia (let us leave aside the "trifling matter" of his attitude toward the CPSU itself) is not familiar with his country's history. Was the unified state — which was only called the Soviet Union after 1922 and ruled after 1917 by the CPSU's predecessors — only formed under them? Was it not Czar of All Russia Ioann Velikiy [Ivan III] who sat in the Politburo instead of B. Yeltsin? And what post did Catherine the Great, who affiliated Orthodox Ukraine and all Belorussia to the Russian Empire, hold in the CPSU? And what of her grandsons, the Emperors Alexander and Nicholas; did they indeed lead the Leningrad underground oblast committee! And, of course, Emperor Alexander III, author of the manifesto in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Black Sea Fleet. This man was indeed a double-dyed communist and a "red-brown"!

It is probably time to call a halt here. In my view everything is clear to everyone. It is clear what the results of the CIS "summit" are and what they can be in the current conditions. They will continue to be like this — until the [Russian presidential] elections on 12 June 1996....

Baltic Ministries To Coordinate PFP Activities

WS3005104895 Tallinn BNS in English
1005 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riga, May 30, BNS — The Defense Ministries of the Baltic states will coordinate their individual Partnership for Peace programs and activities, Latvian Defense Ministry State Secretary Janis Davidovics said Monday.

Defense state secretaries of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia met today in Riga and discussed cooperation mainstreams. Defense leaders will meet for consultations before submitting their individual Partnership programs, while key issues will be considered in the frame of the Baltic Council of Ministers.

All three Baltic states plan to join the Baltop '95 and Cooperative Jaguar training this summer.

Participation in NATO's program will be defined as a national defense priority.

The Latvian defense sector intends to apply for additional budget financing for the purpose this year as no special resources were allotted last year.

The state secretaries also touched on military supply issues.

The initial cooperation program basically provided for exchange of information but in the future the three countries could also perform common military purchases in the West what would bring them closer to NATO standards.

On the other hand, said Lithuania's Jonas Gecas, it is not correct to always perceive the three republics as a united region because each of them has its own legislation, history, traditions and interests abroad.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 27 May

LD2705071295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English
0518 GMT 27 May 95

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 27 Tass — Today's Russian newspapers focus on the summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Minsk. The press informs in detail its readers of a decision to wipe out the border between Russia and Belarus, taken by the leaders of the two states.

The PRAVDA newspaper concentrates on the economic aspect of the Minsk summit meeting.

Turning to the issue of establishing an inter-state currency committee, which was taken by the meeting, the newspaper notes that this idea is "a huge step backward as compared with the Belovezhiye agreements" (agreements taken in the Belovezhiye forest in Belarus heralded the collapse of the Soviet Union) which provided for a united monetary space.

On the contrary, the committee is called upon "to improve separate currencies" in order "to stifle the hydra of non-payments".

The KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA newspaper calls attention of its readers to a statement by the Russian president that he will not go to Kiev to sign a Russian-Ukrainian Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation till the question on the Black Sea Fleet is settled.

The army newspaper KRASNAYA ZVEZDA front-pages an article favouring the creation of "a strong and advanced Navy". Using as a pretext for the article the 90th anniversary of the Tsushima Battle, the newspaper notes that "a loss of the navy at peace time will need even more efforts for its revival".

The press gives much space to the recent bombing of Bosnian Serbs' military targets by NATO aviation. Newspapers spelled out in detail the Russian stand on this issue. A competition is developing in Washington between the White House and Congress: who will earlier force Karadzic make concessions, the IZVESTIYA newspaper notes.

In this connection, Republican leader Bob Dole plans to push for a bill on the United States' unilateral refusal from the embargo on arms supplies to Bosnia. According to the newspaper's forecasts, "Moscow may reciprocate with a similar decision on the U.N. sanctions against Belgrade".

"Such developments will inflict a staggering blow on the U.N. prestige and almost inevitably bring about an evacuation of 'blue helmets' from Bosnia," IZVESTIYA claims.

The ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI newspaper reports that financial difficulties forced the closure of the NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA newspaper. The daily reminds its readers that the same reason was cited for closing the NOVAYA EZHEDNEVNAYA GAZETA and NEDELYA newspapers.

Lack of funds forced the SEGODNYA newspaper to slash the number of desks as well as staff members. The previously prosperous Kommersant also started feeling a financial pinch.

In an interview with the RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA newspaper given on the occasion of Borderguard Day to be marked on Sunday, Nikolay Bordyuzha, deputy director of the Federal Border Service, said that the total length of the Russian border is 60,900 kilometers, about 14,000 kilometers of the total have not been plotted according to international legal standards.

Bordyuzha claims that "the degree of border defence does not meet everywhere requirements of the situation developing on Russian frontiers".

Bank notes with a denomination of 100,000 roubles will be put into circulation on May 30. They have 18 degrees of protection against counterfeiting, deputy governor of the Russian Central Bank Arnold Voylukov said in an interview with the TRUD newspaper.

According to the deputy governor, these notes are protected as securely as German marks. Voylukov also said that several thousand cases of Russian money counterfeits are registered in Russia annually.

Chairman of the Russian United Industrial Party Vladimir Shcherbakov attributes "the role of a political centre" to his party. In an interview with RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA, he describes in detail aims, tasks and the platform of the party.

Press Review for 30 May

LD3005062695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0616 GMT 30 May 95

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 30 (Itar-Tass) — The Sakhalin earthquake is the principal topic in today's Moscow-based Russian newspapers.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA reports that "about 3,000 people have found themselves entombed under the rubble in the town of Neftegorsk. More than 80 per cent of facilities, including 19 five-storey buildings, have been destroyed by the earthquake. Numerous fires blazed out. The town of Okha was also affected."

IZVESTIYA points out that "the sea-going ships of the Russian Ministry of Transport and the Pacific Fleet will be the main transport for the evacuation of local population from the difficult-of-access locality. So far, owing to a heavy ice situation, the ships cannot approach the coast. An ice-breaker of the Far Eastern Shipping Company will be able to reach the shore in only two days' time".

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI writes that "in all, twenty-seven earthquakes measuring five points and more (up to 10) on the Richter scale have been registered in the area of Kuril Islands, the Kamchatka peninsula and Sakhalin Island since 1954. The latest earthquake was the most powerful one, with the magnitude of the earth jolts at the epicentre in the sea of Okhotsk being 9-10 points".

TRUD reports that there was no forecast about the earthquake. A year ago a seismic station in the town of Okha on Sakhalin was closed down for lack of funds.

The newspaper quotes a staff member of the Joint Institute of the Physics of the Earth as saying that his opinion is that a strong earthquake is likely to occur in Avacha Bay near Petropavlovsk Kamchatsky within the next three years.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA quotes Professor Abe from the Seismology Research Institute at Tokyo State University as saying that the latest earthquake occurred at the junction of the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates.

Analysing the series of the latest earthquakes along the North American tectonic plate, professor Abe does not rule it out that a similarly strong earthquake may happen in the area of Hokkaido Island.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA comments on the CIS summit in Minsk:

"On the whole, the Minsk summit has shown that the interest of the participating countries in the expansion and deepening of integration is in inverse ratio to ex-Soviet countries' drawing closer to various international financial and economic institutions.

"This trend is particularly manifest of late on the example of Ukraine which, previously as well, was an advocate of regarding the CIS as a form of 'civilised divorce'".

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA carries an interview with Lyudmila Bezlepkina, Russian Minister of Social Protection.

"The regularly carried out statistical surveys show that the acuteness of social problems in the country does not diminish. The parameters of many of them reach critical values," the newspap3er quotes Bezlepkina as saying.

Touching upon the demographic situation in the country, Bezlepkina points out that the process of the ageing of people in Russia has become practically irreversible. Those who are 65 years of age and more now account for 11 per cent of the population already while the share of those of them who are able to work has declined to 56 per cent.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI carries an article by Chief of the Presidential Staff Sergey Filatov in connection with the first anniversary of the signing of the Treaty on Social Accord.

In the article, Filatov provides answers for the questions as to whether Russian society needed the Treaty and whether it has remained just an empty political declaration.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA comments on the results of the visit of Russia's First Vice-Premier Oleg Soskovets to Kiev.

"Many, including Members of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, view the visit as a virtual surrender of the Crimea and together with it the City of Sevastopol, the main base of the Black Sea Fleet, to Ukraine".

The newspaper also gives the opinion of military experts who believe that "Russia should drag out for as long as possible a transfer of the Fleet's Headquarters, personnel and resources from Sevastopol" but that the very withdrawal to the territory of Russia is inevitable. The question is only whither the Black Sea Fleet will go".

Bosnian Situation

Clinton Seeks Yeltsin Help To Free UN Hostages

LD2605215495 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2030 GMT 26 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Loshchilin; ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian at 0825 GMT on 27 May transmits a service message killing this item. No reason is stated.]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Washington, 26 May — U.S. President Bill Clinton telephoned Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Friday and asked him to "call the Bosnian Serbs" to free the UN forces servicemen they had taken hostage. "I said to him: Persuade the Serbs to stop these actions," the head of the U.S. Administration reported at a brief meeting with journalists in the Oval Room of the White House.

According to Clinton, he asked B. Yeltsin to "tell them to behave decently." He promised the Russian president that if this happened "there would be no more" NATO air strikes on Serb positions. "The taking of hostages and the killing of civilians are wrong, and completely inappropriate actions. They should be stopped," Bill Clinton stated.

Although the fears that the fighting and hostile actions of the Bosnian Serbs toward UN Protection Force [UNPROFOR] soldiers and officers could intensify as a result of the NATO air strikes have come true, the U.S. President defended the decision to start bombing. Having admitted that the air strikes "triggered off the shelling of peaceful residents," B. Clinton said at the same time: "We acted in accordance with the situation that had arisen. Only military targets were bombed." [passage omitted: Pentagon announced that a U.S. aircraft carrier has been sent to the conflict zone]

Kohl, Major Ask Yeltsin To Help Settle Situation

LD2605175195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1649 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 26 (ITAR-TASS) — "German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and British Prime Minister John Major telephoned to Minsk today and requested an emergency conversation with Russian President Boris Yeltsin," reports the Russian President's press service. "The German and British leaders asked the Russian President to help settle the military situation in Bosnia.

"Boris Yeltsin expressed his dissatisfaction with the fact the decision to bomb Bosnian Serbs was taken without an exchange of opinion with Russia. Now that the situation aggravated as a result of this action, Russia is being asked for assistance. Boris Yeltsin noted inadmissibility of these tactics and told Helmut Kohl and John Major Russia will do its best to stop combat operations in Bosnia with understanding there will be no more bombings."

Chirac, Yeltsin Discuss 'Crisis' Situation

LD2705174595 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1730 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 27 May — Russian President Boris Yeltsin spoke this evening by telephone to French President Jacques Chirac at the latter's request, ITAR-TASS was informed by the Russian president's press service. They discussed the crisis situation in Bosnia.

Officials React to NATO Air Strikes on Serbs

Prime Minister Comments

LD2705161395

[FBIS Editorial Report] Moscow NTV in Russian at 1500 GMT on 27 May carries a two-minute 27-second report from the "Segodnya" program on Prime Minister Chernomyrdin's remarks to journalists at Moscow airport before leaving for his vacation in Sochi. Correspondent Vladimir Glusker reports that Chernomyrdin says the government is satisfied with this month's economic performance.

Chernomyrdin then states, "There is nothing good at all about beginning to resolve such a conflict as Yugoslavia with these methods, when such powerful air strikes are being carried out. Our position is known. We spoke to the Serbian side and to the Croats, to the leaders. Tomorrow are flying... [pauses] Today the foreign and defense ministers flew there to talk again to the leaders and to convince them to stop the military actions between them today, so there will not be such powerful strikes. We hope this will be stopped, that they will still sit at the negotiating table.

"As for Chechnya, this is a basic issue for us. It is more important for us, since it is happening in our country. We have stated again, we have said that we are ready to arrange a round table, to sit everyone down together. We have agreed once more to meet all sides and hold discussions, but with those who can influence the resolution of the issue, with those who can make a decision, those who can influence a cessation of military actions."

On the results of the CIS summit in Minsk, Chernomyrdin hopes that a solution can soon be found to the problems clouding relations between Russia and Ukraine, Glusker reports. "These issues will be resolved in June," Chernomyrdin states. "A basic treaty needs to be signed between Russia and Ukraine."

[Video shows Chernomyrdin being seen off on his vacation by First Deputy Prime Ministers Chubays and Soskovets and Deputy Prime Minister Shakhray among others.]

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Cited

LD2605203395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1847 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 26 (Interfax) — Grigoriy Karasin, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman, told Interfax Friday that the use of force in Bosnia-Herzegovina is not a solution to the problem.

He said he was afraid that further NATO air strikes in Bosnia and the use of force in general could drag into the conflict the UN peace-keeping forces deployed in the ex-Yugoslavian republic.

"Moscow uses all contacts available, both through the UN and bilaterally, to receive full operations information and to coordinate, when necessary, the international community's activities," said Karasin.

He said "the solution is restraint and political wisdom on the part of the warring parties which are responsible for the escalation of hostilities."

Karasin stressed that "the conflicting parties must take immediate steps to prevent developments turning into a catastrophe." "In this respect it would be wrong to shift emphasis and put the blame on the international community," he said.

According to Karasin, Moscow is especially concerned about the security of the Russian battalion that is part of the UN forces in the region of Sarajevo. "Mainly thanks to the staunchness of the Russian peace-keepers they have managed to prevent warring parties from clashing on the territory under their control."

"The growing threat to the lives of the Russian peacekeepers and, even more so, hostile actions against them will again cast doubt on the expediency of their staying in Bosnia," noted Karasin.

He spoke in favor of an immediate meeting of foreign ministers from the countries which are members of the Contact Group on Bosnia — Russia, United States, Great Britain, France and Germany. "The necessity of such a meeting is pertinent as never before," said Karasin.

The spokesman reiterated the resolution of the Russian policy of "encouraging Belgrade's sensible position." "For a long time this position has ensured the possibility of progress in the settlement of the Bosnian conflict."

He said that "it is necessary to continue working out a mutually acceptable way of putting into practice the "lifting sanctions for the recognition of Bosnia" scheme."

UN Envoy Opposes Use of Force

LD2705082595 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0815 GMT 27 May 95

[By Boris Sitnikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] UNITED NATIONS May 27 (Itar-Tass) — The NATO air strikes on Bosnian Serbs have not helped to resolve the Bosnian problem but only aggravated the situation in Bosnia. Russia is for discarding force methods of settlement and demands that the U.N. Security Council exert all efforts to reach agreement on a general ceasefire in Bosnia, Russian chief delegate to the U.N. Sergey Lavrov said in an interview with Itar-Tass here on Friday.

He noted that the Security Council continued, during consultations on Friday, to examine the situation in and outside Sarajevo in connection with the U.N. demands to withdraw heavy weapons from the city.

According to information submitted to the Council by U.N Under-Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Bosnian Serbs have not returned heavy weapons they earlier seized from an U.N. ammunition dump. Moreover, they additionally commandeered a batch of heavy weapons from the depot.

"It became known that, since they did not fulfill the first demands which all the sides had to fulfill on May 25, NATO inflicted another strike on the same ammunition dump, against which the first strike was delivered.

"As for the demand to both sides to withdraw all heavy weapons from the Sarajevo area and the 20-kilometer zone around it by noon May 26, according to Annan, the UNPROFOR cannot confirm or deny that there are some heavy weapons in the city.

"This is attributed to the fact that the freedom of movement for U.N. observers was sharply restricted, and they cannot get convinced of the presence of those heavy weapons," Lavrov stressed.

"According to a report by the U.N. Secretariat, Bosnian Serbs hold hostage some 100 people, mostly from the French contingent. They also include Ukrainians and Canadians as well as three Russian peace keepers.

Four peace keepers were not only taken hostage but chained to poles in the area of the ammunition dump in Pale to avoid additional air strikes. They are used, in actual fact, as 'human shields'," the Russian representative noted.

"These actions by Serbs against U.N. peace keepers as well as bombardment by Serbs of Tuzla and other cities, declared 'safe areas' by the United Nations, as a result of which dozens of people died and were wounded, cannot be justified.

"But on a broader scale, the Security Council should look for a way out of the present situation and pay attention to the task of a general ceasefire in Bosnia. No matter how we treat totally inadmissible actions by Bosnian Serbs, it is clear that the air strikes have not helped to find a way for a settlement.

"This is another proof of the consistent stand taken by Russia: the way of stiffening force methods is hopeless."

The Russian ambassador noted that, although Security Council resolutions provide for force methods in case of attacks on U.N. personnel, these resolutions provide for a balanced approach.

The Russian delegation clearly pointed at the Security Council to the need for the UNPROFOR command and the leadership of the U.N. Secretariat to follow precisely this responsible and very balanced approach.

Lavrov said that the Russian delegation insistently demanded that the UNPROFOR command in Bosnia step up its efforts to ensure understandings of the side on an unconditional ceasefire.

"There are grounds for guarded optimism," Lavrov continued. "The U.N. secretary-general's special representative in former Yugoslavia Yasushi Akashi tries, together with commander of U.N. forces in Bosnia, General Rupert Smith, to come to agreement with the military command of Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian government on a ceasefire, and these efforts, according to a U.N. Secretariat spokesman, are actively backed by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic."

Opposes Change to UN Forces' Mandate

LD2705192395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1816 GMT 27 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Sitnikov]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] UNO, 27 May — Russia asks the United Nations Security Council not to permit any "creeping" change to the mandate of the UN forces in Bosnia or their transformation from a peace-keeping force into a warring side in the Bosnian conflict. This threat has arisen in connection with the first real fighting in the history of the conflict, which occurred today between Bosnian Serbs and the French contingent, and led to deaths on both sides. In order to avert this threat, Russia calls for a clear strategy for settling the Bosnian conflict to be developed. The United Nations has yet to possess this. Sergey Lavrov, the permanent representative of the Russian Federation at the United Nations, told the ITAR-TASS correspondent this in an interview after the consultative session of the Security Council held today, which assessed the latest events in Bosnia. [passage omitted on battle between Bosnian Serbs and French troops]

"This battle is an alarming development, because while UN personnel in Bosnia have previously returned fire, they were isolated cases. What we have now is, essentially, the first real combat. And there is, of course, a risk that the momentum of approaches based on the use of force [inertsiya silovykh podkhodov] will lead to the UN forces being dragged into military action against their will, which is something the UN Security Council has frequently spoken out against. Any creeping change to the mandate of the UN forces must not be permitted, nor must they be allowed to become a warring side," the Russian representative stressed.

He said it was already obvious to everyone that the mandate of UN forces in Bosnia would be revised, and the UN secretary general would make a report to the Security Council on the issue next week. "The Security Council will discuss it, and then, of course, the main discussion of the UN's further strategy in Bosnia will be held. It is already obvious, however, that there is no clear strategy at present. The Security Council resolutions, saying in what cases force can be used — and they are still in force — is one thing. Procedures which have been worked out in detail on the basis of these resolutions regarding the specific forms and methods of applying force, including use of NATO air forces, again, is one thing. But how to apply these procedures and resolutions is quite another. First, we believe that they should be applied with great caution. The Security Council has approved the following approach: A one-off targeted use of force when it can no longer be tolerated. Second, we believe that even such a cautious policy on the use of force can be pursued only after calculating all political and military consequences, and only when one has a clear strategy which will answer the questions of how to protect the UN personnel and the civilian population, and at the same time how the prospects for a settlement will be affected in general," Lavrov said.

He said that there had so far been no answers to this question, judging by the talks held today at the Security Council. "But the Russian side raised the issue of it being necessary to have such a strategy, and practically all members of the Council supported us in this," Lavrov said. "People also said that the UN's prestige depended on it being seen now to remain steadfast and to continue seeking its aims firmly. But the UN's prestige will depend on how balanced its approach will be to the whole conflict. It is not just the people of those countries eagerly calling for large-scale air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs which make up world public opinion. Those countries who, while outraged at the appalling activities of the Serbs over recent days, still want to look at the picture as a whole, and to see a balanced approach to the issue of a settlement in Yugoslavia as a whole, and to Bosnia in particular, also contribute to world public opinion."

"It is no secret that there have already been cases where gross violations by government forces in Bosnia have not evoked the due reaction from the United Nations — which did not ask for aviation to be sent in, nor from the Security Council, though Russia has consistently proposed that the Council react firmly to violations by any side," the Russian representative said.

Lukin Questions NATO Strikes

LD2605163395 Moscow INFORMATSIONNOYE AGENTSTVO EKHO MOSKVY in Russian 1415 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] "After all, it is not that long ago that the Croats began an attack and not the Serbs. So why make a strike against the Serbs? One American told me: 'Well, that is how it turned out,'" said Vladimir Lukin, chairman of the State Duma's Committee for International Affairs, in an interview with the Ekho Moskvy radio station, commenting on NATO's position towards Serbian Krajina.

"We will proceed from the fact that our partners are strictly ideologized people who do not care who the agressor is, who is attacking, so we need to promote our interests regardless," Vladimir Lukin said.

"We do not need to yell or shout or demand that we be called a great power," Vladimir Lukin thinks, "but where our real interests lie and where there is the opportunity to realize them, then we must do it."

'Dual Standard' Seen in Air Strikes

MK2705091095 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 27 May 95 p 1

[Report by Andrey Smirnov under the "Situation in Bosnia" rubric: "A Dual Standard as a Means of Aiming"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] NATO aircraft delivered another two strikes on the Bosnian Serbs' ammunition depots near Pale, the capital of the self-proclaimed Serbian Republic, yesterday. The very first strike came 25 May after the warring sides refused to cease fire in Sarajevo and to withdraw heavy weapons outside the 20-km "security zone" around the Bosnian capital. The bombardments have only escalated the warfare, however. [passage omitted]

Russia visibly stands out among other countries in its reaction to the latest developments. It has become the sole member of the UN Security Council to oppose NATO bombing strikes on Serb-held positions. As if it were not enough that their effectiveness is open to doubt, double standards are clearly seen behind such actions. No UN representative can explain coherently why only Serb-held positions are being bombed, whereas the UN ultimatum was delivered to the Muslims, too. Boris Yeltsin also spoke about Moscow's negative attitude to the NATO aircraft strikes yesterday. In his words, Russia knew about this decision of the United Nations and had warned the Serbs beforehand that their positions would be subjected to bombardments unless they agree to make concessions. The Serbs did not heed the warning and, as the Russian president put it, "got what they deserved."

Bosnian Serbs Said Holding 11 Russians Hostage

LD2705182895 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1755 GMT 27 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Zagreb, 27 May — According to reliable sources, a Russian military observer is among the hostages held at a Bosnian Serb military base near Pale. Contact has been lost with another two Russians who are UN military observers.

Eight Russian servicemen who were guarding a depot of heavy armaments in the zone monitored by the Russian battalion, have been disarmed and are under arrest. An ITAR-TASS correspondent was told this today at the main headquarters of the Bosnian contingent of the UN peacekeeping forces.

Russian Troops in Bosnia Detailed

LD2805211395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1246 GMT 28 May 95

[By Andrey Naryshkin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Zagreb, 28 May (ITAR-TASS) — A difficult situation is arising with regard to the Russian peace-keeping soldiers who have been seized by Serbian troops along with other international observer groups. Colonel Andrey Demurenko, chief of the staff of the UN "Sarajevo" sector, said today in a telephone conversation with the ITAR-TASS correspondent that three of the twelve isolated missions are causing serious concern to the command. The Russian battalion's No. 1 post which has 12 servicemen has been totally cut off by the Serbs.

This rather remote observation post is located on Mount Vidikovac in a converted country restaurant and has reasonable stocks of food and water. The 13 Russians at the Uzdonica [as received] arms collection area are in a similar position. Our fellow-countrymen at an arms collection area near Hresa are in a much worse position: 12 soldiers and an officer are locked in an accommodation container meant to house three people. Colonel Demurenko said that it is probable that, as a result of the talks which are being held constantly with the Serbs, the Russians in Hresa, at least, will be provided with more tolerable conditions of detention.

In spite of all the difficulties, however, not a single one of the heavy weapons which are under the Russians' control has been removed by the Serbs and, against the general background, the servicemen's situation is not the worst. None of them have been subjected to Serb mob law and severe beating as has happened to some Ukrainians and French.

Of course, this does not apply to the military observers Majors Batyushenkov and Teterevskiy who, according to yesterday's reports still remained handcuffed to Serb military installations in Pale. "We are taking the most active measures to gain their release and we hope that we shall be able to achieve a positive result today," the chief of staff of the sector said.

He said that all the areas for collecting heavy weapons and equipment in the Serb districts of Sarajevo today remain under the total control of Serb troops and militia. As a rule the approaches to them are mined and the UN forces servicemen guarding them have been disarmed and detained. At some collection areas there have been thefts of both Serb weapons handed over to UN control in February last year and also of the "blue helmets'" equipment. However, the most alarming circumstance is that the Serbs have taken away to somewhere unknown some of the Ukrainian servicemen guarding the area. "We think that they have been taken to Pale where the Serbs intend to use them as living shields," the Russian officer said.

Strange as it may seem, yesterday and today it has been very quiet in the city, itself: Not more than 50 explosions of mortars and shells have been recorded in the 24 hour period, which is considerably less than the daily average. However, the UN's "Sarajevo" sector is on highest alert and all check points as well as the capital's Butmir airport are closed.

"I feel intuitively that the worst moment has passed," Colonel Demurenko said. Everyone understands that there can be no going back to the situation which existed before 25 May but it is simply essential to stabilize the situation.

Touching on the possibility of a visit to Sarajevo by ministers Pavel Grachev and Andrey Kozyrev, Demurenko stressed that the best option would be for them to stay with the Russian battalion stationed in the Serb district of Grbavica. Only there is it possible to ensure the ministers' safety and make it possible for them to hold consultations with key figures of the UN's Bosnian mission.

Two Russian Observers Released

LD2905105295 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1014 GMT 29 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Zagreb, 29 May — Colonel Andrey Demurenko, chief of staff of the Sarajevo UN forces sector and senior officer of the Russian peacekeeping contingent in the former Yugoslavia, today confirmed that two Russian military observers who have been held hostage by the Serbs in the Pale area have been released. Major Teterevskiy and Captain Batyushenko arrived at the Russian battalion lines on Sunday evening, the chief of staff said.

He refuted reports by some Russian media that the remaining Russian officers and soldiers (about 30 men) blockaded by the Serbs at two weapons collection points and an observation post (OP) had been released. "Nobody has authorized us to release these people. Difficult as it may be, we must carry out the duty of guarding the weapons which has been charged to us. What is more, a unilateral step like that could lead to undesirable consequences in terms of relations with UN servicemen from other sub-units," said Demurenko.

The Russian servicemen are by far not the worst off, he said. Many peacekeepers are in much worse conditions. The contingent's main staff has lost contact with several groups of blue berets deployed in various regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular with the Ukrainians and the French. We think they are all right, but we have lost contact and we are not yet in a position to determine their precise location, the officer said.

He also said that the Muslim side had also begun to take hostages. Last night in Gorazde the Bosnians arrested three Ukrainian soldiers. The UN forces command does not know where they are now.

Bosnian Muslims Said Taking UN Hostages

LD2905220295 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1700 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] According to the latest reports from ITAR-TASS, the [Bosnian] Muslim side has also begun taking hostages. Bosnians arrested three Ukrainian soldiers last night in Gorazde. The command of the UN forces does not know where they are now. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Attends Contact Group Meeting

Kozyrev Condemns 'Barbarism'

LD2905115995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1038 GMT 29 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 29 May — "We expect that the Contact Group will be able to give a new assessment to the situation and work out a decision which will help bring about a cessation of hostilities and accelerate the process of finding a peaceful settlement of the conflict," Andrey Kozyrev told an ITAR-TASS correspondent today, answering a question on the situation in former Yugoslavia.

The Russian foreign minister said life has shown more than once that the situation is only worsened by tactics of avoiding real work with Belgrade, double standards when reacting to actions by the conflicting sides, and NATO air strikes, even though they have the agreement of the United Nations.

At the same time, he said, only two weeks ago he proposed that the foreign ministers of the Contact Group countries gather to draw up joint decisions. It took a sharp deterioration in the situation in Bosnia for his colleagues to respond to the proposal. "All the same, it is good that we have gathered today," Andrey Kozyrev emphasized. "Russia will follow an active line intended to bring about mutual recognition between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and Bosnia-Herzegovina, with a significant relaxation of sanctions against Belgrade." He considers that this decision will strengthen the hand of those who support bringing the Bosnia peace plan to life and its eventual recognition by the Bosnian Serbs.

"Of course we cannot allow barbarism toward peacekeepers to be tolerated further," Kozyrev said, adding that the Contact Group will consider increasing the defensive capability of the UN forces and reinforcing their security. "We are working on the basis that all members of the Contact Group must jointly exert pressure on the conflicting sides in order to force them to reach an agreement on a universal cease-fire," he said.

Moscow To Oppose UN Withdrawal

LD2905165495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1521 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 29 (Interfax) — During the meeting of the foreign ministers of the contact group's member-states (Russia, the U.S., Britain, France and Germany) in the Hague on Monday, Russia will express its opposition to the peacekeepers' withdrawal from Bosnia and Herzegovina, a high-ranking Russian diplomat close to Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, told Interfax on Monday.

He said that Russia's position was supported by Britain and the U.S.

It would be counterproductive to withdraw the about 50,000 peacekeepers, firstly, because the world community would be admitting its complete ineptness and, secondly, because it is extremely difficult to do for technical reasons," he said.

He also said that the contact group might take a compromise decision.

"The essence of the compromise is as follows: the international community provides guarantees that NATO would not deliver air strikes on the positions of the Bosnian Serbs, while the latter provide solid guarantees that they would no longer take peacekeepers hostage," he went on to say.

He noted, however, that the discussion might take a different turn. "The Bosnian Serbs have gone beyond the limits of the admissible, sending emotions very high," he said.

Kozyrev Leaves for Netherlands

LD2905135395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1321 GMT 29 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Yuriy Kozlov]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow, 29 May — Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev left on a four-day visit to the Netherlands today where he is to attend a busy round of talks with the foreign ministers of a number of countries. It is expected that the Russian minister will today hold his first meetings within the framework of the Contact Group on the former Yugoslavia at which ways of ending hostilities between the sides in the Bosnian conflict will be discussed. [passage omitted]

Comments on Arrival Cited

LD2905205095 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1900 GMT 29 May 95

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russia is to speak against the withdrawal of peacekeepers from Bosnia at a meeting of the Contact Group in The Hague. A high-ranking source in the Russian foreign minister's entourage reported this to INTERFAX. He said the U.S. and Great Britain also supported Russia's stance. The minister himself, who arrived in the Hague today, explained his views to our correspondent. A session of North Atlantic Cooperation Council, in which Kozyrev is to take part, is expected to take place on 31 May.

[Begin Kozyrev recording] The work of the Contact Group has visibly slowed down in recent times, while on the spot — that is in Bosnia, in Yugoslavia — on the contrary, there has been more intense combat action. I think that the Contact Group will nevertheless, work in a more balanced fashion and cooperate with those who support the peace plan. First and foremost, this means Belgrade. This is the key. The lifting of sanctions and real cooperation with Belgrade. All the rest, all these military measures, these are hardly likely to be a substitute, they are a poor substitute for political efforts. [end recording] [video shows Kozyrev at airport, being greeted by Churkin and other officials, speaking to journalists]

'Source' on Hopes for Solution

LD3005105295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1005 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 30 (Interfax) — The foreign ministers of Contact Group member states are staking on finding a political settlement to the conflict in former Yugoslavia thanks to Russia's position, a source close to Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev told Interfax in the Hague on Tuesday. He said that "after all, the Contact Group accepted Russia's idea that no one should look back to the past or seek ways of punishing the Bosnian Serbs who have taken hostage U.N. peacekeepers."

"Our goal is Bosnia's peaceful future. And this is what the foreign ministers discussed in the Hague," said the diplomat. He also pointed out that the foreign ministers' statement "does not say a single word about the possibility of new NATO air strikes on Bosnian Serb positions." The Contact Group has no plans to begin a direct dialogue with Bosnian Serb leader Radavan Karadzic — "at least until the Bosnian Serbs accept the plan proposed by the Contact Group," he said.

Kozyrev: UN Forces To Be Strengthened

LD3005110995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1005 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] THE HAGUE, May 30 (Interfax) — The foreign ministers of the Contact Group's member-states have decided to strengthen the U.N. forces in former Yugoslavia, not to withdraw them as was expected, stated Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev. He told a press conference in The Hague on Tuesday after a five-hour discussion, that "the Contact Group has confirmed its orientation to political not military settlement of the conflict. Kozyrev also said the Contact Group had proposed that the republics of former Yugoslavia recognize each other as soon as possible and that Belgrade recognize Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Contact Group also urged Belgrade to enhance control over the border with Bosnia. Kozyrev said that the resolution on sanctions against Belgrade "will be finalized by the U.N. Security Council." He told Interfax that "it is early yet to say whether the sanctions against Belgrade will be lifted or only softened." "It is clear, however, that the problem has been moved from standstill," he said. "The Contact Group believes that the Bosnian Serb leaders are responsible for the safety of the peacekeepers taken hostage, and warns that adequate measures will be taken if the hostages are treated roughly or if they are not sent back to their units," says the Contact Group's statement. The document also reads that the ceasefire agreement should be resumed and that the Bosnian Serbs should accept the peace plan proposed by the Contact Group as the starting point for the talks.

Contact Group Issues Statement

LD3005151995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1443 GMT 30 May 95

[By Vladimir Taranov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 30 (Itar-Tass) — A joint statement of the German, British, Russian, U.S. and French Foreign Ministers was adopted in The Hague today after a five-hour discussion at a meeting of the international Contact Group for Bosnia, head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's information and press department Grigoriy Karasin told a briefing here today.

The statement calls for political settlement instead of the use of force which has failed to bring lasting peace. The document urges immediate termination of combat operations and resumption of the cease-fire regime which was first violated by the Muslim-Croat side, said Karasin.

The group members discussed consolidation of the peace-making forces instead of their withdrawal from Bosnian territory. This consolidation should be preceded with immediate and unconditional liberation of hostage peace-makers.

The ministers reaffirmed their intention to boost the elaboration of a U.N. resolution on suspended sanctions against Belgrade.

The meeting elaborated a plan to be implemented immediately, said the Russian diplomat.

Yeltsin's Special Envoy Leaves for Belgrade

LD2905200195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1816 GMT 29 May 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: by diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 29 (Interfax) — Well-informed sources in the Russian Foreign Ministry told Interfax that the Russian president's Special Envoy for Settlement in ex-Yugoslavia Aleksandr Zotov had urgently left for Belgrade today to conduct consultations with Serb President Slobodan Milosevic.

According to the same source, the trip was so urgent because of the "unprecedented" actions of Bosnian Serbs taking UN peacekeepers as hostages. The diplomat said he had an impression that after the NATO air strike Bosnian Serbs' leaders no longer understood what they were doing.

The same source said Zotov was not going to meet with Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

Zotov is expected to leave Belgrade for the Hague where the foreign ministers of the contact group on Bosnia will meet this evening. The contact group includes Russia, the U.S., Great Britain, France and Germany.

Zotov Interviewed on Arrival

LD2905213195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2100 GMT 29 May 95

[By Ivan Ivanov and Aleksandr Kondrashov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BELGRADE, May 30 (Itar-Tass) — Russia is concerned about the escalation of war in Bosnia, a Russian envoy said upon his arrival in Yugoslavia, but said his talks in Belgrade are unlikely to produce any "miraculous recipes."

In an interview with Itar-Tass at Belgrade's airport on Monday, Aleksandr Zotov, Russian President Boris Yeltsin's special envoy to the former Yugoslavia, said he will "exchange views" with the Yugoslav leaders on the further development of the situation and possible interaction between Moscow and Belgrade in easing tension in Bosnia.

He said he did not expect any "miraculous recipes" from his talks and meetings in Belgrade, but added that "we need to use all opportunities that Moscow and Belgrade have in order to facilitate this, directly or indirectly."

Asked why he did not go to Pale or Sarajevo for peace talks, Zotov said "I cannot rule out that this will not happen in the future. By the way, the Russian leadership considered such possibilities before, but there were no conditions for implementing them."

Zotov made it clear that his visit to Belgrade is connected with a meeting of the Contact Group due to open in the Hague today to discuss Bosnian settlement and the "plan of action of Russian diplomacy."

Speaking about the recent aggravation of the situation in Bosnia, Zotov said Russia shared the concerns of some of the Western countries that the "tension may increase, while NATO's involvement may make the crisis an international one."

Zotov Meets With Milosevic

LD3005114295 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1041 GMT 30 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 30 May — Aleksandr Zotov, special envoy of the president of the Russian Federation to the former Yugoslavia gave Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic a verbal message from Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev during two hours of talks today. It expresses alarm at the development of events in Bosnia-Herzegovina threatening as it does the whole of Europe with a great calamity, and also at the blockade of soldiers of the UN peacekeeping forces by Bosnian Serbs near Sarajevo. The Russian diplomat told the ITAR-TASS correspondent of this at the end of his meeting with Milosevic.

Zotov said that they had had a serious discussion of possible moves by Moscow and Belgrade to defend Russian peacekeepers and "blue helmets" from other countries. "I have reason to believe that while Milosevic's peaceloving policy is at variance with the actions of the Bosnian Serb leadership, he will nonetheless do everything in his power to solve this problem. We believe that the authority and weight of President Milosevic enable him to contribute to progress in this area."

The Russian diplomat described as rash the stance of the Bosnian Serb leaders who have declared that they are willing to free the blockaded peacekeepers after receiving guarantees from the international community that NATO aircraft will not subject any of the sides in the Bosnian conflict to air strikes in future. "No self-respecting country will bargain over the safety of its contingents of 'blue helmets.' You can use peacekeepers as small change in bargaining of this sort but that is not a serious policy. By adopting this approach the Bosnian Serbs could bring a great calamity upon themselves," Zotov believes.

Bosnia Situation Said on 'Brink of Total War'

MM3005102795 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 30 May 95 p 3

[Report by Sergey Sidorov: "Double Standards Destroy Peacemaking"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo — NATO's air strikes against Serb targets near Pale 25-26 May have brought the warring sides to the brink of total war, in which the "blue helmets" are already being seriously involved.

It is difficult to judge whether this was anticipated by Akashi, leader of the UN mission to former Yugoslavia, who sanctioned the air raids. More than 300 UN servicemen have been disarmed and seized as hostages. The Bosnian Serb troops have surrounded every single "blue helmet" subunit on territory controlled by the Serbs. Fuel and food supplies to "blue helmets" in the so-called safety zone have been cut off. Groups of military observers operating on Serb territory have been arrested. Their transportation, communications, and documents have been confiscated. Two French and two Serb soldiers died and more than 20 people on both sides were wounded during the battle on Vorbanja Bridge in downtown Sarajevo, which was provoked by the air raid. Dozens of civilians in Pale, including children below the age of eight years, were injured by shrapnel or the shock wave — the bombs, ranging between 500 and 1,000 kg in weight — exploded only 200 meters away from an apartment block. The stepping up of combat operations along all Bosnian fronts brings more and more casualties each day, mainly among the Serb and Muslim populations.

The result of the air raids is rendered even more paradoxical by the fact that they not only played into the hands of the Bosnian Muslim leadership which — ever since the beginning of the conflict — has been banking on involving the "blue helmets" in the war on its side, but were also welcomed by the Bosnian Serb military command. According to one officer from the Sarajevo Corps, it is "good that all cards have been laid on the table. Since they are bombing us, this means that the United Nations in Bosnia is not a neutral force but a combatant and it ought to treated accordingly...."

The local Serb population is indignant at the duplicity of UN and NATO officials who claim that the air raids were undertaken allegedly to "defend the Sarajevo safety zone." Gordon Todorovic, an engineer at one of Pale's industrial enterprises with whom I had occasion to talk recently, described the decision by the United Nations and NATO as "downright duplicity." "When the Croat Army chased the Serbs out of Western Slavonia — as much of a safety zone as Sarajevo — and destroyed more than 2,500 civilians in the process, the NATO bloc did not even bat an eyelid," he said. "Could this be a clear-cut signal — it is OK to kill the Serbs?"

Local residents also draw attention to the following interesting detail. A few days prior to the start of the air raids, military observers from NATO member countries left on leave scheduled by their headquarters in Zagreb. Only East Europeans and two Russians — Captains Pavel Teterevskiy and Dmitriy Batyusheko — were left in Pale 25 May. They were all interned during the second day or air raids. In actual fact they became hostages to the decision to use force which was made in high-ranking capitals. Moreover, they became dual hostages — against probable fresh strikes by NATO aviation and against possible acts of vengeance. Later on, by a decision of the Bosnian Serb Army Main Staff, the Russians were released.

According to a Main Staff spokesman, a political solution is needed in order to obtain the release of all UN servicemen, including 43 Ukrainians. At present it is difficult to guess what form it will take and when such a solution will be found. Russian Federation Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev is due to arrive in Belgrade while this report is being transmitted. He is scheduled to have meetings with the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the unrecognized Serb Republic (Bosnia-Herzegovina). Meanwhile, approximately a week prior to the decision about the air raids, a detailed report on the situation in Bosnia was submitted to UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali. This was announced by a well-informed source at the headquarters of UN forces in Bosnia, who asked to remain anonymous. The report contains a conclusion about the critical situation of UN forces in this former Yugoslav republic and proposals to amend their mandate. According to the source, the mission's leadership recommends "avoiding the use of force" in the course of the Bosnian peacemaking operation, since the "strong-arm option" presupposes a limited choice of means to influence the warring sides. The mission's arsenal contains nothing apart from protests and air raids. It needs something in between.

It cannot be ruled out that the present crisis will determine to a large extent the UN Security Council's decision on the new mandate of "blue helmets" in

Bosnia. Meanwhile, dozens of mines and shells continue to explode in both the Serb and the Muslim districts of Sarajevo. NATO's combat aircraft maintain station in the skies above the city, threatening to finally blow up the situation there.

Confusion Over Kozyrev Balkan Non-Visit Viewed

MM2905151895 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
30 May 95 pp 1, 3

[Report by Maksim Yusin: "War Between United Nations and Bosnian Serbs Could Start at Any Moment"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Events of the past two days in Bosnia-Herzegovina have confirmed our worst fears — it seems as though the situation is finally getting out of the control of politicians, and the UN peacekeeping forces are being gradually drawn into a war against the self-proclaimed "Serb Republic."

Having suffered NATO air strikes last week, the Bosnian Serbs chose the most radical of the possible responses available to them. To all intents and purposes they opened hostilities against the 20,000-strong contingent of "blue helmets." By the morning of 29 May more than 300 peacekeepers were in the Serbs' hands.

Radovan Karadzic has decided to act in close accordance with the experience of Saddam Husayn, who used citizens from the Western states as "human shields" during the Gulf War to protect Iraqi strategic installations from allied air attacks. The Serbs have concentrated the captured peacekeepers at military dumps, headquarters, and weapons plants, handcuffing them to walls, posts, and gates. Journalists were invited to record these scenes. The heart-rending pictures carried that day on TV around the world were meant, as Karadzic saw it, to defuse any desire on the part of Western leaders to repeat the bombing raids — the hostages would inevitably be the first victims.

Among the UN servicemen captured by the Serbs are three Russian officers, who share the sad fate of their French, British, Canadian, Ukrainian, and Czech colleagues. Did Radovan Karadzic think that by chaining these men to posts he would place his potential allies in Moscow in a no-win situation? It is hard to imagine that after all that happened at the weekend even the most fervent supporters of Russo-Serbian friendship in the State Duma would decide to openly voice their sympathy with that "poet and humanist" Radovan Karadzic. The NATO air strikes and the Serbs' belligerent steps have left Moscow in a very difficult position. The embarrassment over the Balkans visit — which failed to materialize — by Andrey Kozyrev and Pavel Grachev characterizes better than anything the confusion gripping the Russian leadership. Flying to Sochi on vacation Saturday, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin announced that the foreign and defense ministers would be leaving for Belgrade in the next few hours to hold talks on settling the Bosnia crisis. But two days have gone by and Pavel Sergeyevich and Andrey Vladimirovich are still in Moscow, and at the time this edition of IZVESTIYA was being put to bed it could be said with a great degree of confidence that the visit would not be going ahead. We were told by the Foreign Ministry Information and Press Department that on the afternoon of 29 May Andrey Kozyrev will be flying out of Moscow — not to Belgrade and not to Sarajevo but to The Hague, where he is scheduled to meet the next day with colleagues from the countries making up the contact group on the former Yugoslavia.

According to the official version carried on TV, the Balkan trip by the two ministers is being postponed because none of the people Kozyrev and Grachev would possibly be talking to is currently available. Even if we credit this explanation, it was hardly the only obstacle. The main problem is that Moscow simply has nothing to say to the Serb leaders now — either in Belgrade or in Bosnia.

All contacts with Radovan Karadzic were broken off last year. And it is naive to assume that the head of the Bosnian Serbs, who threw down a challenge to Slobodan Milosevic, his recent patron, himself, would heed appeals for peace from Russian diplomats. As for the Yugoslav leadership, not very much depends on it in the current situation. The Bosnian Serb field commanders are not subordinate to Milosevic. Moreover, without waiting for pressure from the world community or persuasion from Russia, Belgrade has already condemned the taking of "blue helmets" hostage. Yugoslavia brought in (or at least announced) sanctions against the Bosnian Serbs last year. Milosevic will do no more, however much Kozyrev and Grachev may try to persuade him. Thus, the visit announced by Chernomyrdin was doomed to fail from the outset.

The only consolation for Moscow is the fact that the other UN Security Council permanent members have proved to be equally helpless in this situation. Neither U.S., British, or French diplomats are able to propose a proper solution to the Bosnian impasse. Meanwhile, the prospect of UN peacekeeping forces — and later NATO forces — being drawn into a war with the Serbs is becoming increasingly likely. [passage omitted]

Other Issues

Kozyrev: Attitude Toward NATO Expansion Unchanged

LD2905162995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1505 GMT 29 May 95

[by ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 29 May — The Russian Federation agrees with the Partnership for Peace initiative and supports a program connected with it. Andrey Kozyrev, the Russian Federation foreign minister, said this today on the instructions of Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

The statement by the Russian foreign minister received by ITAR- TASS says that at the same time Russia's attitude toward NATO's expansion remains unchanged. "We are still convinced that this is in the interests neither of Russia's national security, nor of European security as a whole. Moreover, haste in resolving this problem may endanger the emergence of truly mutually beneficial and constructive relations between Russia and NATO."

At the same time the Russian foreign minister spoke in favor of working out "an efficient model of European security not based on blocs."

Further on Kozyrev Remarks

LD2905205795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2017 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 29 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev's statement that Russia agrees with NATO's Partnership for Peace programme has been taken in diplomatic circles as a seal of approval for Russia's participation in the programme, informed sources told Itar-Tass on Monday.

"Basically, we agreed with the documents which we refused to approve on December 1, 1994," they said.

At the same time, the sources said Moscow is not going to agree to the accelerated expansion of NATO by incorporating East European countries. "There will be no easing of our position on that," a high-ranking expert dealing with Moscow's relations with NATO said.

Earlier today, Kozyrev said agrees with NATO's Partnership for Peace initiative and supports its programme, but will not change its position on the expansion of the North-Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

In his statement made at Russian President Boris Yeltsin's request and transmitted to Itar-Tass, Kozyrev said Russia's position on NATO's expansion remains unchanged. "We are still convinced that it does not meet either the interests of Russia's national security or the interests of European security in general," he said.

"Any rush in dealing with this issue may jeopardise the establishment of truly mutually advantageous and constructive relations between Russia and NATO," Kozyrev said.

The minister called for developing an "effective non-bloc model of European security."

The framework document for the Partnership for Peace programme was signed by Kozyrev in the Belgian capital in June 1994. Russia and NATO also signed a special protocol identifying the spheres of their interaction. However, Russia said the plans to admit East European countries to the Alliance, while keeping Moscow out infringed upon its interests.

In December 1994, Russia refused to accept the documents specifying its relations with the Alliance, including an individual Russia-NATO programme within the framework of the Partnership for Peace and a document identifying the spheres of broader and deeper cooperation between them.

Kozyrev's statement confirmed the acceptability of these documents to Moscow and made it possible to start the mechanism of Russia's participation in the Partnership for Peace programme.

Specialists said this does not require the signing of any documents by either part. "I am not saying that they will immediately become effective. We can expect the Alliance to make a similar statement too," the expert said.

Karasin Calls Attention to Kozyrev Statement

LD3005145895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1443 GMT 30 May 95

[By Valeriy Sevryukov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 30 (Itar-Tass) — Head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Information and Press Department Grigoriy Karasin called correspondents' attention to the statement on Russian-NATO relations made by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev on the instruction of Boris Yeltsin before leaving to The Hague on Monday.

In the words of the diplomat, it will be a meeting on the "16 plus 1" format on Wednesday to discuss the interaction between Russia and NATO. The sides will focus on an individual partnership program and the document "Spheres of Broad and Deepened Dialogue and Cooperation between Russia and NATO."

Agreement 'In Principle' to Two NATO Documents

LD2905202495 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1816 GMT 29 May 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: by diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 29 (Interfax) — The fact that Russia agrees to the NATO Partnership For Peace program means that it agrees "in principle" to the "launching" of two major documents on the partnership between Russia and NATO, a senior Russian Foreign Ministry official told Interfax at a briefing in Moscow Monday.

The documents are "Individual Program of Partnership Between Russia and NATO Within the Partnership For Peace Program" and "The Spheres of Wide and Profound Dialogue and Cooperation Between Russia and NATO."

The diplomat noted that the "launching" of the documents was suspended by the Russian side in Brussels in December of 1994 because of the NATO's decision to expand eastward.

On Monday Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev made a statement containing Russia's agreement to the NATO Partnership For Peace initiative and to its program.

However, the official said, the Kozyrev's statement does not mean that the documents come into effect. He said a similar statement should be made on the part of NATO.

The diplomat stressed that "the agreement to the Partnership For Peace program does not alter Russia's attitude to the alliance's expansion." "For us it remains unacceptable."

The diplomat said that "Moscow has not had nor has any claim to the recognition of Russia's special role in the relations with NATO." "The alliance itself says in its documents that it can not neglect Russia's special status of a world nuclear power."

According to the official, the issue of Russia joining NATO "is not on today's or tomorrow's agenda."

"We must see where NATO is evolving and whether the alliance will manage to become an integral part of the new wider model of the European security," he said, adding that there is "no threat" of isolation of Russia.

He said that Russia does not sign the two documents, one of which defines spheres and directions of Russia-NATO cooperation within the Partnership For Peace program and the other deals with individual aspects of bilateral cooperation outside the program. "We say that the documents, which were agreed upon before, are acceptable."

The diplomat explained that the only document that needs signing is the frame document on Russia's joining the NATO Partnership For Peace initiative. Kozyrev signed it at the NATO Council meeting of foreign ministers in Brussels, on June 22, 1994.

Right there, in Brussels, according to the diplomat, "we pointed out that the limits of Partnership For Peace are too narrow for a certain sphere of Russia-NATO relations and do not reflect Russia's role and place in the international relations."

In this connection the individual program of partnership and "The Spheres of Wide and Profound Dialogue and Cooperation Between Russia and NATO" were worked out.

The official stressed the fact that NATO has no documents of similar "contents and scale" with any other country."

Diplomat: Russia To Officially Join PFP 1 Jun

LD3005141295 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1301 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] THE HAGUE, May 30 (Interfax) — Russia will officially join NATO's Partnership for Peace [PFP] program on Wednesday if "nothing extraordinary" happens, a senior Russian diplomat said on Tuesday.

An agreement for Russia to join the NATO program was reached by the presidents of Russia and the United States, Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton, during the American leader's visit to Moscow earlier this month, the diplomat, who is close to Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, told Interfax in The Hague.

The joining ceremony, to take place in Nordwijk, the Netherlands, prior to the opening of a session of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, "will not involve signing any document or exchanging any letters," the diplomat said. "Kozyrev and a NATO representative will simply make statements to that effect."

Along with participation in Partnership for Peace, Russia plans to launch a program of bilateral cooperation with the North Atlantic alliance, the diplomat said.

U.S. 'Shocked' at Russia's 'Disobedience'

MM3005102295 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 30 May 95 pp 1, 3

[Article by Vladimir Mikhaylov under the "Topical Commentary" rubric: "Washington Is Shocked: Moscow Has Stopped Saying 'Whatever You Say, Sir'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATO leadership is totally obsessed with the idea of its advance toward the East. Questions of expanding the military alliance were at the center of attention for the participants in the three-day session of the North Atlantic Alliance. A highly significant fact: For the first time since this bloc was founded, the meeting was held in the capital of a country which is not a NATO member — in Budapest.

How is Russia reacting to the forthcoming (inevitable, it is said in Washington) expansion of the bloc? A certain confusion at first, when even certain Russian politicians started saying that we should not lag behind our former Warsaw Pact allies, has given way to other sentiments. These became particularly clear, and gained strength, after the May summit: The American delegation, accustomed to the idea that in recent years Moscow has always made big concessions in return for crumbs, brought along a long list of demands along with a list of punishments and sanctions for not fulfilling them. But the Kremlin's open "disobedience" stunned the president's team.

They had to put a good face on it: Washington admitted that the Russian-Iranian deal is absolutely legal and not in conflict with international agreements, and in return Boris Yeltsin "played along" with Clinton by solemnly refusing to supply Tehran with gas centrifuges for which there was never any contract in existence. The Republican majority in the Congress and even some Democrats took a very dim view of Moscow's refusal to stand to attention and bark out "Whatever you say, sir." That being so, it is necessary to accelerate the admission of the former socialist countries to NATO, it was decided in Congress, and in the meantime they drew up an amendment that will stop U.S. aid to Russia.

That sounds serious. But it only sounds it. On closer examination, a number of significant factors emerge that considerably weaken the U.S. position. First, the question of "swelling" NATO was decided long ago, and throughout that time Moscow was considering some way of neutralizing that step and seeking natural strategic allies. The first that comes to mind is Tehran. Iran is capable of cutting off the Strait of Hormuz, through which the West receives the oil it needs from the Near East. MiGs and antiaircraft complexes bought from Russia will protect Iran against "retaliatory strikes."

As for the U.S. aid, that consists of mere crumbs: The lion's share goes on humanitarian deliveries and the financing of projects designed to reduce Russia's nuclear potential, which Congress is not about to touch.

Incidentally, N. Gingrich, speaker of the U.S. Congress House of Representatives, spoke out extremely frankly on this last point in a CBS television interview: "We must remember that we are not only helping to bring the Russian people and that system closer to democracy, **we are also decommissioning their nuclear arms. And that is very useful to us.**"

Clear and concise, and therefore — God preserve us from such "aid."

Yeltsin To Attend G-7 Summit in Halifax

LD2705192795 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1755 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 27 (Interfax) — The G-7 Halifax summit is due to start on June 15, with President Boris Yeltsin arriving in Canada a day after, a senior Russian diplomat told Interfax.

Canadian Prime Minister Jean Cretien is expected to brief Yeltsin on the summit's course on June 16 before the latter joins a 7 + 1 meeting to discuss economic issues of Russia's interest.

Yeltsin is also scheduled to take part in discussion of political and global issues on June 17 before flying to Moscow on the same day.

The diplomat said the agenda would include environment protection and migration, mass destruction weapons and regional conflicts.

He said that for the first time, Russia had been allowed to formulate and agree with G-7 leaders a range of issues "we would like to discuss at the summit."

This includes the terms of Russia's entry into GATT/World Trade Organization and its relations with the IMF.

According to the Russian diplomat, Moscow will seek a review of some economic restrictions on GATT/WTO membership introduced when the former Soviet Union was still alive.

Yasin: No Discussion on Iran Deal at Summit

LD2905103795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1016 GMT 29 May 95

[By Nikolay Setunskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TORONTO May 29 (Itar-Tass) — The issue concerning the delivery of Russian reactors to Iran "has been more or less settled" at the working meeting of Personal Representatives of the Heads of State and Government of countries to participate in the G-7 summit in Halifax in June, Russian Economics Minister Yevgeniy Yasin, who represented Russian President Boris Yeltsin at the meeting which has ended here, has told Itar-Tass.

Attempts were made to include a mention of the deliveries of reactors in a draft Final Document of the Summit, the Russian minister said. "Our position on the matter is explicit. We view it as an economic one. If anyone wants to regard it as a political issue, we categorically object to that. Since the consensus rule is applied at Summits, G-7 countries will have to reckon with this circumstance," Yasin said.

As for assertions that "military technology is being ostensibly supplied to Iran, President Yeltsin has already said that we do not supply any military technology there", Yasin went on to say.

"On the other hand, we explained to our colleagues for the Summit that Russia has got to strive for markets, as is done by other countries, too. This is a normal competitive struggle. To object to it is deliberatly to apply methods of political pressure for a solution to someone's economic problems," the Russian Economics Minister said.

Economic Cooperation Department Official Cited

LD2605170195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1555 GMT 26 May 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 26 (INTERFAX) — Russia is not craving for G-7 but is ready to interact with that organization, Pavel Smirnov, director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Economic Cooperation Department, declared in an interview with Interfax on Friday.

In his opinion, "as impoverished Russia is going through an economic crisis, it cannot accord the luxury to be in that club of the wealthy."

Smirnov recalled that apart from G-7, there is also G-8. This international institution, involving Russia, was set up at last year's G-7 summit in Naples.

"We interact with G-7 precisely as partners rather than participants, the diplomat said. Our representatives, preparing G-7 and G-8 summits meet their opposite numbers from G-7 countries to exchange views on the economic issues of interest for Russia, which, after all, is not the last country in the world, and its position must be reckoned with."

"G-7 membership not only gives rights but places responsibilities", Smirnov stressed. "G-7 deals with lots of issues, which are too far from the real interests of Russia in its current economic situation," he explained.

"Gone are the times when we would thoughtlessly run anywhere for the sake of a quick association with the so-called civilized world." "When Russia ripens, the industrialized countries will invite it themselves since they are vitally interested in admitting every worthy gentleman to its club," Smirnov remarked.

At the same time, he described Russia's cooperation with G-7 as "useful and necessary," reporting that at the G-7 summit in Halifax (Canada) next month, President Yeltsin "will discuss with his partners the economic issues of interest for the Russian side."

The schedule for the Halifax summit specifically sets aside time so that "we can express our views on separate economic problems, bothering us," Smirnov said.

"The Russian side has already formulated these problems and has brought them to the knowledge of its partners, who are not only eager to discuss them but are favourably disposed toward some of them," the diplomat continued.

He reported that the economic package, prepared for Halifax, includes some 20 points, which the Russian Economics Minister Yevgeniy Yasin, helping to prepare G-7 and G-8 summits on Russia's side, is currently discussing with his G-7 opposite numbers in Toronto.

Among the questions formulated by the Russian side, Smirnov referred to the prospects of Russia's participation in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and with the Paris Club of Creditor-Countries.

"Our aim is to proceed from cooperation with OECD to full-fledged membership in that organization, which, in fact, is the brain trust of G-7, the diplomat explained. This really is a strategic course, approved by Russia's President and government."

However, Smirnov noted, "such a step calls requires some time and deliberation since it implies for Russia obligations, stemming from its OECD membership."

"Russia would also like to be a member of the Paris club, yet not as a debtor only but as a creditor, too" the diplomat remarked, adding that "as a major creditor in the world, Russia has its interests in this respect."

The G-7 summit will open in Halifax on June 15. On the next day, Russia's President Boris Yeltsin is due to arrive in that Canadian city.

As a top Russian foreign ministry official reported to Interfax Friday, on June 16, Yeltsin will meet with Canada's Prime Minister on June 16, [as received] who will brief the Russian president on the summit proceedings. The summit will then continue in the "seven plus one" format with economic problems of interest for Russia to be discussed among other issues.

As the diplomat reported, a G-8 summit, scheduled for June 17, would examine political and global problems. On the same day, Yeltsin is to fly back to Moscow.

According to the source, the G-8 meeting will deal with such globally salient issues as ecology, migration, fight against poverty, mass destruction weapons, regional conflicts, and the problem of international sanctions.

What will make the upcoming summit in Halifax different from its predecessor in Naples is that economic issues will get more prominence there than at the Naples meeting.

The diplomat specifically noted that "for the first time in the practice of such meetings, already at the prepatory stage, the Russian side formulates and coordinates with the G- 7 countries the issues which "we would like to discuss at the summit."

Among them are terms for Russia's entry in GATT and Russia's relations with IMF, the source said, adding that in Halifax, the Russian side intends to press for the revision of some of the economic restrictions imposed on GATT membership back in the times of the former USSR.

G-7 Summit Seen Promising Country Little Role

MK3005095095 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 30 May 95 p 4

[Report by Natalya Kalashnikova under the "Preparations for a G-7 Summit" rubric: "Before You Become a Respectable Gentleman..."]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Despite Moscow's timid attempts to attach greater importance to Boris Yeltsin's participation in the Halifax summit, no changes in the meeting's schedule are envisioned. The Russian leader will join his counterparts from the G-7 only on the second day of the meeting, to discuss political problems. Economic matters, including money-laundering and the safety of nuclear reactors, will be discussed without Russia; a communique on these matters will also be signed in its absence. Yeltsin will be briefed on the results of the economic discussion by Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien, who will chair the meeting, after which the Russian president will attend a working lunch during which he will be given an opportunity to spell out his views. In short, there are no plans to hold a special meeting on the Russian question in Halifax as, for instance, was done in Naples last year. Still, according to Economy Minister Yasin, he "discussed in detail everything that will have a bearing on Russia in the economic communique" in Toronto, that is, he was "indirectly involved in drawing it up." [passage omitted]

In Moscow, meanwhile, there are no particularly high hopes regarding the G-7. Pavel Smirnov, chief of the Foreign Ministry's economic cooperation department, said the other day just that: "There are plenty of questions dealt with by the G-7, but they are extremely far from Russia's actual interests given its current economic situation." He added: "The era has passed when we, having pulled up our pants, were running in whatever direction we might have been told with the sole wish to integrate with the so-called civilized world. When Russia becomes mature, they will call us themselves, because they have a vested interest in including every respectable gentleman in their club." Still, the Foreign Ministry appears to be cunning: We so much wish we were called now!

Iran 'Happy' at Russian-U.S. 'Confrontation'

MM3005092795 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 30 May 95 p 3

[Report by Leonid Mlechin: "Iran Is Happy That Yeltsin and Clinton Could Not Agree, and Offers Moscow Alliance and Friendship"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran and Moscow — Russia has gained a new friend and ally. He promises to protect Russia's interests and safeguard it from bad acquaintances and dangerous friends.

This person, about whom almost nothing is known, is now the subject of interest among the intelligence services of the world. Efforts are made to prevent foreign correspondents from reaching him. An exception was made for Russian journalists.

Reza Amrollahi is head of Iran's state committee for atomic energy. An intense, self-contained man, he looks like a scientist, not an administrator. A specialist in plasma physics and nuclear power, he wrote a doctoral dissertation in the United States and defended it in France immediately after the 1979 Islamic revolution.

The committee for atomic energy has a large and carefully guarded site on the outskirts of Tehran. Photography is banned on this site. Reza Amrollahi is in a brand new block enviably equipped with imported technology. Out of his office windows you can see a wind generator and the snowy caps of the mountains that surround Tehran on all sides.

Will the Russian-Iranian contract for the delivery of nuclear reactors, which provoked a sharp U.S. reaction, be fulfilled?

"There are already 200 Russian specialists working in Bushehr," Amrollahi said. "At one time the shah planned to build 23 nuclear power stations, but that was an unrealistic plan. Construction work was carried out on two nuclear power stations in the little town of Bushehr. At one station 85 percent of all the necessary work was done, and at the other 65 percent."

After the Islamic revolution the FRG Government ordered Siemens to suspend operations in Bushehr. The Iranians are looking after all the equipment left behind by the Germans with uncharacteristic thoroughness. During the Iran-Iraq war Saddam Husayn's aircraft bombed this complex and several bombs hit their target, but in general the buildings survived. Russian specialists are to complete what the Germans began.

Why does Iran want a nuclear power station? Iran is a major oil and gas exporter.

"We are a developing country, we need to expand our energy base," Amrollahi said. "You can't rely entirely on oil and gas alone. We are building hydroelectric power stations, thermal power stations, and nuclear ones too. In time we hope to obtain one-fifth of the energy we need from nuclear power stations. The Chinese have supplied us with a small research reactor and are to supply another. But with Russia we are taking rather bigger steps in the cooperation sphere."

The Americans claim that in parallel with the construction of nuclear power stations Iran is implementing a secret program for the creation of nuclear weapons. There is nothing surprising about Iran wanting the nuclear bomb; virtually all the states of the Near and Middle East dream of this in secret (while Pakistan and Israel, by all accounts, have already acquired nuclear weapons).

How close are Iranian physicists to the desired goal? The majority of experts agree that Iran's nuclear program is in the embryonic stage and lags far behind North Korea's.

According to the Americans, three years ago the Iranians went to Kazakhstan to buy enriched uranium. After that the United States hurriedly bought and exported from Kazakhstan approximately 500 kg of enriched uranium — enough for 25 bombs. American intelligence experts report that Iranian firms worldwide are buying equipment that is not needed for a peaceful atomic project but is required in order to create nuclear weapons.

"We do not have a military program," Amrollahi gave the customary rejoinder with no particular emotion. "It was the Americans, by dropping the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who made nuclear power dangerous to man. But atomic energy is not only weapons. Your country uses atomic energy in all kinds of ways, even in pharmaceuticals. And we have similar plans."

Why is the United States opposed to Russian nuclear experts going to Iran and Russian reactors being supplied?

The Americans are afraid that the Russian experts will agree, for big money, to do some work on the military atom. Furthermore Russia is promising to teach the Iranians nuclear physics. And what Iran lacks, in the Americans' opinion, is nuclear specialists. What does Tehran think about this? Reza Amrollahi, leader of the atomic energy committee, and Mohammad Aref [name as transliterated], rector of the capital's university, told me proudly that they do not intend to make a bomb, but that there are plenty of highly qualified specialists in Iran.

At Tehran University I saw the list of teachers at the natural sciences faculty, where they train physicists, chemists, and mathematicians. With rare exceptions, the professors and teachers of these disciplines studied in the United States or Western Europe.

The late shah had big ambitions. He sent young Iranians to study nuclear physics at American and European universities. Maybe the shah wanted to acquire nuclear weapons. At all events, it is clear that the nuclear program is a matter of national prestige. And the more the United States tries to hamper the Iranians, the more zealously they will split the inexhaustible atom.

The Iranians are very proud of their country. After all, Persia was the first superpower of the ancient world. The worst thing you can do to the Iranians is to hold them in contempt. They are even gratified, in a way, by the Americans' attention, which is seen as evidence of Iran's significance in world politics.

The Iranians hate their present isolation from the outside world. Iran dreams of taking part in world affairs, it wants to be noticed, it wants attention to be paid to it.

Tehran watched with a sinking heart the meeting between Clinton and Yeltsin at the May celebrations in Moscow. When Yeltsin said that the contract with Iran remains in force, there were celebrations in Tehran.

"I have invited President Yeltsin to Tehran," Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani told us, "in order to discuss with him the prospects for cooperation, including cooperation in the Caspian Sea basin, and the problems within the CIS — Karabakh, Tajikistan. And also the Balkans, Iraq — we should talk about everything. Russians and Iranians are Asian peoples and we are interested in each other."

Whom does Iran number among its allies and friends, I asked Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati.

"Very many countries," the minister replied confidently. "Russia included."

Minister Velayati has a cunning look, his weary eyes are narrowed, and a harsh half-smile is on his lips.

"We were waiting for Russia to see the light," the foreign minister said, "and it has done so. A confrontation between Russia and the West is apparent. That means Russia has at last found itself."

At the book fair in Tehran the precepts of Imam Khomeyni are on sale translated into Russian, full of angry and contemptuous words about the Soviet Union.

"These words of Khomeyni's come from the time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the communists' rule," Iranian Foreign Ministry leaders assured us. "Furthermore, Iraq, which attacked us, was armed to the teeth with Soviet weapons. Tehran was bombed by Soviet-made aircraft. At that time everyone was speaking disapprovingly of the Soviet Union. But we no longer consider your country pro-American."

Deputy Minister Murtazo Sarmandi [name as transliterated], a very tall, black-bearded man in a white shirt with a stand-up collar, said:

"We are glad that Russia has abandoned the imperialist policy that the Soviet Union pursued. We understand that Russia's domestic situation has prevented it from having an autonomous foreign policy, but now the situation is improving."

American pressure on Moscow is part of the American program of subjecting other countries to itself, Sarmandi noted. But Russia, jealous of its honor, did not yield to the pressure. That creates a basis for the development of our relations.

"I thank Russia for coming out against the world's oppressors, first and foremost the United States," parliament speaker Noteq-Nuri told us. "I am not saying that because of the reactor deal. I say a separate thank-you for the reactors. In general I was very worried about Russia, I was afraid that your country might trample on its own proud history and honor by giving way to the pressure of the world's oppressors. But, praise God, you have understood the true nature of the United States."

Nowhere is Russia's present foreign policy assessed so highly as in Iran.

"A resolute turn toward autonomy can be seen in Russia's policy. And now the West is forced to take your interests into account," Foreign Minister Velayati said.

Policy Review Urged in Light of U.S. Shifts

MK2705115095 Moscow ZAVTRA in Russian No. 21 May 95 (Signed to Press 23 May) p 2

[Report by Yu. Byalyy under "Commentary 1" rubric: "A Far From Idle Question"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In view of the recent changes on the U.S. political Olympus, President B. Clinton is facing more and more problems.

The Republicans, who won a firm majority in both houses of Congress, making no secret of their intentions sharply to change course in most spheres of the foreign and domestic life of the United States, are presenting the President with an ever swelling political and economic bill.

The first call was the reanimation of doubts about the expediency of Clinton's creation: the North American Free Trade Association, NAFTA, especially in view of the collapse of the Mexican peso, which called for a multi-billion dollar infusion from the U.S. state budget. Then a number of newspapers recalled Clinton's special role in Yeltsin's not so "democratic" victory over the opposition in October 1993.

This week the Republicans took on a strategy of "pressure and onslaught" with respect to Bill Clinton. Judge for yourselves: On 17 May the Senate voted to create a special Senate commission, designed to complete by February 1996 (the year of presidential elections in the United States, it will be recalled) the investigation into the "dubious transactions" in real estate by the Clinton family. On 20 May the House of Representatives approved a comprehensive plan for abolishing the U.S. budget deficit by the year 2002. This program involves public humiliation for Clinton because under it, within seven years it is planned to cut more than $1 trillion of budget appropriations, for which purpose it is necessary to abolish the Departments of Energy, Education, and Commerce, to liquidate 14 state agencies, and stop implementation of 283 federal programs.

It is not difficult to anticipate that soon the bill presented to Clinton will also include:

failure of the U.S. peacekeeping missions in Africa and Yugoslavia;

continuing sociopolitical instability in Mexico, forcing the government to make concessions to the Zapatistas and demanding new expenditures from the United States; and

economic losses by U.S. corporations as a result of the economic embargo on Iran.

Also recalled will be the failures in the trade war with Japan and Western Europe, the loss of U.S. prestige in the Arab world as an independent peacemaker as a result of the veto imposed on the UN Security Council resolution condemning Israel's attempts to annex Palestinian tracts of territory in East Jerusalem, failed attempts to form a Croatian-Muslim federation, the President's tendency to listen too closely to the advice of the Jewish lobby in the U.S. establishment, and many, many other things.

Obviously, President Clinton, who hopes for reelection, will not be able to ignore such massed pressure and will have to adjust course. The first signs of such an adjustment can be seen even now in, for example, the statements by a number of high-level figures about the need to look for "two alternatives." Apparently meant are, first, an alternative to Boris Yeltsin as head of Russia (alternative No. 1) and, second, an alternative to Russia itself as the United States' main ally in the post-Soviet space (alternative No. 2).

What does a change of U.S. course bode for Russia?

First, a further toughening of the U.S. position with respect to NATO expansion, including the proposal to admit, as soon as possible, the Baltic countries and Ukraine into the North Atlantic bloc. For the benefit of romantically minded "Russian rightists" it needs to be pointed out that in the current situation any reliance on a split European unity, with Germany staying loyal to Russia, is more than naive! In this event Germany will happily adopt the Drang nach Osten strategy in any of its options in exchange for U.S. concessions with respect to German hegemonist ambitions. But history has already seen this!

Second, the aspiration to exclude participation by Russian peacekeepers in peacekeeping operations in Yugoslavia, i.e., to crowd Russia out from the Balkans, will begin to be realized. It is not ruled out that the methods for playing this game will be chosen taking into account the specifics of the Serbian extremist movement, which is internally loyal to Germany and controversial on Russia.

Third, statements about the need to create a cordon sanitaire of "democratic states friendly to the United States" around our country, which will "restrain Russia's imperial ambitions," will begin to be translated into life. At the same time all the consequences of a whole set of southern threats will be shown to Russia. At the utmost the United States can make temporary concessions to a number of Islamic states, including Iran and Iraq, playing here, too, its "German card."

The anti-Clinton set in the United States also maintains that a first priority measure with respect to "Russian imperialism," regardless of the process of pacification of Chechnya, should be to limit Russia's access to European and international political and economic institutions: the Council of Europe, the World Trade Organization, the Agreement on Limiting Technology Proliferation which is being created in place of COCOM, and so forth. One can relate differently to membership in these organizations, but to be "isolated" at the most inopportune moment.... At the very least, adequate preparations have to be made for this.

Of course, there will be (there is already!) talk about the need to toughen credit policy with respect to Russia and the need to have an impact on it through the London and Paris Clubs (good-bye, rescheduling of our foreign debts); and proposals will be made to close Russia to world high-tech commodity markets, primarily arms markets.

This list can be continued but even now it is clear that in formulating Russia's foreign policy, it is urgent not only to choose allies but also to make a choice between the bad and the much worse in the U.S. policy sphere.

Conclusion of U.S.-Ukrainian Exercises Noted

MM3005091495 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 30 May 95 p 3

[Report by Anatoliy Polyakov: "Shield-95 Exercises End in Ukraine"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Shield-95 [as published] joint Ukrainian-U.S. exercises ended at Yavorovskiy test site in the Carpathian Military District last Sunday [28 May]. The participants rehearsed joint actions in the performance of peacemaking operations in "hot spots." Ukrainian and U.S. Defense Ministers Valeriy Shmarov and William Perry met at the test site 25 may, and even competed at shooting the pistols with which their armies are armed.

The Americans brought along not only their equipment but even their own drinking water. The exercises cost the sides almost $5 million. The sides' actions were observed by 17 military attaches, 120 journalists, and six representatives of NATO countries. Valeriy Shmarov told journalists that Ukraine is not rushing to join NATO, especially since nobody there is expecting it to. But other Ukrainian politicians make no secret of, and Leonid Kuchma while in the Baltic countries rather openly hinted at, Ukraine's desire to join this military bloc.

PRAVDA Views Military Exercises

MM3005085195 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 30 May 95 p 3

[Article by Colonel Vasiliy Izgarshev: "All Quiet on the Exkland-Naravia Border"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A dangerous ethnic conflict flared out along the border between Exkland and Naravia at the end of May, threatening to spread the conflagration to neighboring countries. The latter appealed to the United Nations to immediately send troops to the explosive territory of the two states. On the very same day, 25 U.S. military transport aircraft landed at one of the airports with 300 soldiers from the U.S. Army's 3d Infantry Division which is stationed in Germany. In addition, 432 servicemen from the Ukrainian Army's famous 24th Samara-Ulyanovsk Iron Motorized Rifle Division also arrived there. Incidentally, nowadays the Ukrainian authorities have retained only one of the division's titles — "Iron." The Samara-Ulyanovsk part of its title brings undesirable memories.

I would imagine that readers have realized that I am talking about the joint U.S.-Ukrainian exercises codenamed Peace Shield-95, which ended at the test ground near Lvov 27 May, and that there is no point in looking for the aforementioned countries on the world's map — they do not appear there. These countries are hypothetical, a figment of imagination in the exercise plans elaborated by Washington and Kiev within the "Partnership for Peace" framework.

If truth be said, there might not have been any need to even mention these exercises had it not been for the propaganda noise which accompanied the start and conclusion of the exercises. William Perry and Valeriy Shmarov, the two countries' military [voyennyy] ministers — who are, incidentally, 100-percent civilians — did not fail to comment on the exercises, as if encouraged by one and the same prompter. The exercises apparently were successful and they helped the soldiers from the two armies to get to know each other better, promoting the idea that they can and must be friends.

So what, readers might say, is it bad to be friends, is it better to confront one another? Who is against friendship? We, as our popular song goes, "are for peace, for friendship, for cordial meetings," but we are for the sort of friendship that is not aimed against others, especially not against neighbors.

I listened to the words spoken by the partner-ministers and kept hearing the latest postulates by Kiev's president. Ukraine is reviewing its attitude toward the policy of nonalignment and, furthermore, the capitals of the Baltic states which Leonid Kuchma visited heard overt hints about the aggressiveness of one of these states' neighbors. Can you guess who this neighbor is?

Dear readers, a very complex situation would develop in today's world if the Baltic countries dream — both when asleep and when awake — about NATO soldiers in their countries as guarantors of their "freedom" and "independence." The situation would become even mope complex if NATO — meaning U.S. — boots were to trample the lands of our good and glorious southwestern Slav neighbor-sister country. Could it happen yet again, as it did over 70 years ago, that we should be mounting guard over Narva and Pskov, over other Russian cities and villages which only five years ago were deep inside the Russian rear, far away from border guard posts?

Kuchma Proposals on Black Sea Fleet Criticized

MM2905133695 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 May 95 p 1

[Report by Vladimir Maryukha under "KRASNAYA ZVEZDA and Telegraph Agency Correspondents Report" rubric: "Of Former Bases Ukraine Proposes To Leave Black Sea Fleet Only...Vegetable Base"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Federation Navy — Despite previously reached accords, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma has sent Boris Yeltsin a message containing proposals allowing the Black Sea Fleet to retain only certain coastal facilities, depriving the Russian section of the Black Sea Fleet of the right to be based in Ukraine, including Sevastopol.

These proposals contradict the already agreed principle of the joint basing of the Black Sea Fleet and Ukrainian Naval Forces which was a particular concession made by the Russian side. Now the appetites of the Ukrainian military, which is relying on cooperation with NATO, is growing and consequently the Black Sea Fleet could be left with only depots of no use to anybody instead of naval bases.

Yerin Comments on Chechnya on Arrival in Beijing

LD2905201695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1904 GMT 29 May 95

[By Grigoriy Arslanov and Pavel Spirin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIJING, May 29 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Interior Minister Viktor Yerin said he did not see any forces in Chechnya "deserving any credit or assuming any responsibility for their words." "They produce many statements but all of them are not worth a brass farthing," he added commenting on the situation in the republic.

Yerin spoke immediately upon arrival to Beijing for a working visit.

"We regularly meet all those who voice their desire to negotiate. However, experience has shown that these people are not capable of holding talks, reasonably assessing the situation or developing any coordinated measures which would make progress possible," Yerin said.

Yerin said he relied on peace talks as an ultimate solution of the Chechen problem. Criminals who remained in Chechnya — "one cannot describe them in any other way" — must realize the futility of resistance, Yerin said. "They will be forced to bring themselves and those who still believe them — and this is a minor part of the population — to a collapse, to a calamity, or to take reasonable steps, that is to surrender heavy weapons, to give up arms, and start peaceful life. There is no other way," the minister stressed.

Yerin reminded that "illegal armed formations are being suppressed in Chechnya."

Touching upon his Chinese visit, the minister said he planned to discuss measures aiming to boost mutual cooperation between the two countries' law enforcement agencies. Such cooperation is being regulated by an agreement signed during Russian President Boris Yeltsin stay in Beijing in 1992, he said.

The minister flew to the Chinese capital from Kharbin where he focused on interactions between Russian and Chinese regional interior bodies. When in Russia's Far East Amur region, he discussed just the same problems, the minister said.

Zyuganov-led CP Delegation Arrives in PRC

LD3005082195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0637 GMT 30 May 95

[By Grigoriy Arslanov, Pavel Spirin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beijing, May 30 (ITAR-TASS) — A delegation of the Communist Party of Russia headed by chairman of the Central Committee of the party Gennadiy Zyuganov arrived here on Tuesday at the invitation of the Communist Party of China (CPC). This is the first official delegation of the Russian Communist Party to visit China since the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Asked by ITAR-TASS if Russian communists are going to establish official interparty ties with the CPC, Zyuganov said at the Beijing airport: "These ties have been established long ago. It is no problems. We have regularly been maintaining relations with the embassy, with Chinese comrades, with specialists. All parliamentary delegations that visited China included representatives of the Communist faction. They conducted negotiations along the state and the party lines".

Li Chenqren, deputy chief of the International Relations Department of the CPC Central Commitee, who welcomed the delegation expressed the hope that Gennadiy Zyuganov's visit is to promote the development of relations between the two parties and the two countries.

Zyuganov will conduct negotiations with chief of the International Relations Department of the CPC Central Committee Li Shuzheng. It is yet uncertain if Zyuganov will be received by General Secretary of the Central Commmittee Jiang Zemin. So far there is a plan for Zyuganov's meeting with a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Central Committee.

The Communist Party, China's ruling party, received at the same level a delegation of the Russian Agrarian Party that recently established official contacts with the CPC.

Besides Beijing, the delegation of the Russian Communist Party will also visit Shanghai and Henan Province.

The programme of the visit envisages familiarisation with the experience of the Chinese reforms, including those in the rural areas. Prominent Russian agricultural expert Vassiliy Starodubtsev who is on the delegation is particularly interested with the situation there.

Posuvalyuk, Syria's Khaddam Discuss Peace Process

LD2905090195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0658 GMT 29 May 95

[By Anatoliy Golovastov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIRUT, May 29 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk and Syrian Vice-President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam who held talks in Damascus on Sunday evening, discussed the latest developments in the regional peace process in the light of a framework agreement, reached between Syria and Israel, on ensuring security between the sides after a withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied Golan Heights.

The Russian diplomat also held a meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' in Damascus. The sides paid special attention to bilateral cooperation.

Syria is the last country of Posuvalyuk's mid-East tour, during which he visited Israel, the Gaza strip, Jordan and Lebanon.

State Duma Delegation Arrives in Egypt

LD2905104895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0432 GMT 29 May 95

[By Georgy Shelenkov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CAIRO, May 29 (Itar-Tass) — A delegation of Russia's State Duma, led by Deputy Speaker Artur Chilingarov, arrived in Egypt on Sunday for a three-day official visit within the framework of the development of Russo-Egyptian interparliamentary contacts.

The delegation is to hold talks with Ahmad Fathi Surur, Speaker of the People's Assembly (Parliament) of Egypt, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, and meet with other Egyptian officials.

Another Russian parliamentary delegation, headed by Ramazan Abdulatipov, Deputy Speaker of the Federation Council, had visited Cairo a week ago.

A Russian parlimentary delegation, led by Mikhail Mityukov, First Deputy Speaker of the State Duma, is currently in Kuwait after visiting Syria.

Local political circles are inclined to view the visits as signs of Russia's striving to restore its historical role in the Middle East Region, which is being advocated in Egypt at both political and public levels.

Delegation Departs for EC Congress in France

LD2905162495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1330 GMT 29 May 95

[By Yekaterina Zhilyakova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 29 (Itar-Tass) — A Russian delegation headed by vice-premier Nikolay Yegorov left for Strasbourg, France, for a session of the European Congress of local and regional authorities. The session will open on Tuesday.

The Congress, a consultative body of the European Council, was set up by the EC committee of ministers in 1994. Its aim is to ensure participation of regional authorities in the process of uniting Europe. Russia will take part in a session of the organisation for the first time, as a specially invited participant.

The main purpose of the delegation is to inform the Congress about the reforms of Russian regional authorities, Yegorov told Itar-Tass before departing. He is to speak at the session.

The Russian delegation also plans to familiarise itself with the structure of the Congress so that to set up a permanent delegation which will participate in the work of the Congress.

Davydov, Cambodian Foreign Minister Hold Talks

LD2705111295 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1703 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 26 May—Oleg Davydov, deputy chairman of the Russian Government and minister of foreign economic relations, received Cambodian Foreign Minister Ing Huot today, the deputy prime minister's press service has reported.

Speaking to journalists, Davydov noted that "the Russian Government is expecting much from the establishment of scientific- technical cooperation that will lay the organizational basis to enable specific projects to be carried through. For its part, Russia is prepared to cooperate in the extraction and refining of oil in Cambodia, the construction of a hydroelectric power station, the processing of rubber, and also in the implementation of other projects planned within the framework of international organizations."

The sides agreed that it is necessary under present conditions to increase the exchange of information on the potential for exports and imports, which is of interest to business circles in both countries, and at the same time to encourage contacts between businessmen with a view to broadening trade and economic cooperation.

Economic Cooperation Pact Signed With Vietnam

LD2605175795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1549 GMT 26 May 95

[By Sergey Afonin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 26 (Itar-Tass) — A meeting of the Russian-Vietnamese intergovernmental commission for trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation ended here today with signing of several bilateral documents. These include a protocol on trade and economic cooperation in 1995 and an agreement on reinvestment of part of the Vietnamese debt.

Head of the Vietnamese delegation and Vice-Premier Tran Duc Luong told Itar-Tass the Vietnamese delegation is satisfied with the content and character of activities of the commission which aims at development of comprehensive bilateral cooperation in the spirit of mutual understanding and benefit.

The Russian side is satisfied with the regular and systematic nature of commission meetings, and upgraded bilateral interaction, Russian Vice-Premier Yuriy Yarov told Itar-Tass.

The two-day meeting focus on new approaches to bilateral trade with due account of transition to market relations, and further cooperation in oil and gas industries, power engineering and the agro-industrial complex.

The bilateral goods turnover is expected in 1995 to be no less than last year — 500 million dollars.

As for the Vietnamese debt, estimated at 10.2 billion transferable rubles (the payment unit of former CMEA [Council for Mutual Economic Assistance] states), both sides have reached a basic agreement on re-investment of debt part in joint ventures on Vietnamese territory.

Political Issues

Yeltsin Dismisses Polevanov From Control Administration

LD2905174295 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1712 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 29 May — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has released Vladimir Polevanov, deputy head of the president's Control Administration, from his post in connection with a reduction in the number of posts for deputy heads in this directorate. The Presidential Press Service reported this to ITAR-TASS today.

Chernomyrdin Upbeat on Economy, CIS Relations

LD2705173195 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 27 May 95

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Leaving for a vacation in Sochi today, Viktor Chernomyrdin was highly optimistic about the current economic situation.

[Begin Chernomyrdin recording, shown standing in airport building] We expect the gross domestic product to grow as whole. We are expecting manufacturing and the economy to grow. This is the first time — I mean in the May-May period — this is the first time [that this has happened] since perestroyka began. [end recording]

[Correspondent S. Milyanchikov, over video of Chernomyrdin] There have also been results in relations with the CIS countries.

[Begin recording] [Chernomyrdin] We have stopped dragging our feet on some of the issues. There has been progress. We are no longer marking time and that is important. We have begun to discuss specific issues and are dealing with specific business.

[Milyanchikov] And Russo-Ukrainian relations? There was a statement by Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin] yesterday about the Black Sea Fleet.

[Chernomyrdin] The decision has been made for the presidents to hold a meeting on the 9 June devoted to the Black Sea Fleet, the Russian fleet. I think that the basic problems will probably be solved in June. We need to then move toward signing a basic treaty between Russia and Ukraine. [end recording]

[Milyanchikov] [video shows Chernomyrdin leaving for his flight] Viktor Chernomyrdin intends to use his vacation to think out the role and place of the Our Home Is Russia movement. The Russian prime minister also plans to meet leaders of the southern regions and the republics of the North Caucasus during the next two weeks.

Chernomyrdin Leaves on Sochi Vacation

LD2705134695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1335 GMT 27 May 95

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 27 (ITAR-TASS) - Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin left Moscow for Sochi on Saturday afternoon.

During the two-week vacation, Chernomyrdin is expected to make brief working trips to the Stavropol region and hold a conference with the local section of the social and political election movement "Russia — our Home" which he heads.

The Russian Prime Minister will also receive Russian ministers and heads of departments in his Sochi residence, Press Secretary of the Russian Prime Minister Viktor Konnov told ITAR-TASS on Saturday.

Rybkin Said To Transport Intelligence Equipment From U.S.

MK3005073095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 30 May 95 p 2

[Report by Yelena Tregubova under the "Transit" rubric: "Intelligence Equipment Camouflaged as Suite of Furniture. A Surprising Denouement of the 'Rybkin Furniture' Story"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The story of "Rybkin's American Suites of Furniture" came to a surprising denouement the other day. Dmitriy Biryukov, press secretary of the State Duma speaker, said in a conversation with your SEGODNYA correspondent that, "as a matter of fact," Mr. Rybkin's special flight from America was carrying "Primakov's intelligence equipment." What he meant was that precisely for this reason Ivan Rybkin's delegation could not take humanitarian aid for orphans on board.

In an interview for SEGODNYA, Yuriy Kobaladze, chief of the Foreign Intelligence Service [SVR] press bureau, would not deny information about secret equipment that was allegedly transported by the parliamentary mission's aircraft. According to Yuriy Kobaladze, the issue is equipment for the Federal Government Communications and Information Agency [FAPSI], which was left in the embassy from the Soviet era.

An SVR source who asked not to be identified admitted that the transportation of intelligence and other secret equipment by planes of official Russian delegations has been a "fairly frequent" practice. "This may be the most diverse equipment, or documents, or even a human being," the source said. In his words, in the case of Ivan Rybkin, a relevant agreement on carrying secret equipment was reached with the Russian Foreign Ministry, "but Rybkin himself could well have been unaware of the content of the boxes."

SVR officers confirmed that American services "in principle" are not entitled to examine the cargo of official delegations. When asked by your SEGODNYA correspondent about the tactlessness of using the lack of customs examination to carry secret cargo, the interlocutors responded "No" and said that "this is the same as diplomatic mail." Nonetheless, the sources admitted that "of course, we try to keep such deliveries secret," because otherwise the Americans "would, of course, raise a hullabaloo."

The intelligence officers were filled with deep indignation at Dmitriy Biryukov, the speaker's press secretary, who "blew their cover," and say that by so doing he simply "wanted to get off easy for the furniture scandal." They asked your SEGODNYA correspondent to "understand that the SVR cannot be blamed for the humanitarian aid being thrown away from the special plane — the aircraft was big enough and had much room even with the secret cargo on board."

Ironically, spokesmen for the Russian special services were showing much more signs of concern about possible reproaches for their role in "hampering the delivery of humanitarian aid" than about possible consequences of making public the practice of delivering secret equipment by official planes.

Filatov on Likely Outcome of Elections Law Standoff

MM2605140495 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 26 May 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Why Is Compromise Necessary?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted]

From Our Files

Assessing the situation that has developed over the draft Law on Elections of State Duma Deputies, Sergey Filatov, leader of the Russian Presidential Staff, stressed that the president's actions mean no more than securing a compromise between the structures of power.

The head of the presidential staff clarified his idea by saying that if the Law on Elections of State Duma Deputies is adopted by 12 June, in other words six months before the election date, there will be no difficulties with the election campaign.

Guided by "intrigue," some ignorant people commenting on the president's actions are circulating the view that the option of signing the law and subsequently making amendments to it was allegedly chosen by the president with the idea that the State Duma might delay examining the amendments and then they might affect not the December campaign but only the next election campaign thereafter.

Sergey Filatov rejected this fabrication, while at the same time thinking that the delay in adopting a new version of the law might cause some difficulties. First with the registration of electoral associations, second (albeit unlikely) in the fact that the Duma, by delaying the adoption of the law following the presidential veto, may shift political responsibility for this onto the president. However, it is the State Duma that has put the upper chamber and the president "under its thumb" [pod svoye resheniye] by failing to take note of the Federation Council's viewpoint. But by rejecting the law the president is striving to ensure that a compromise is reached between all power structures.

As for the prospects of the Duma introducing the presidential amendments in the text of the law on elections, Sergey Filatov believes it most likely that a compromise will be reached on the ratio of deputies' mandates and on state and municipal employees' participation in the election campaign.

Filatov Addresses Public Chamber on Elections, 'Unrest'

LD2705162495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1310 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 27 (INTERFAX) — Parliamentary elections will take place next December and presidential elections in June 1996 in Russia, the presidential administration chief Sergey Filatov declared, addressing a session of the Russian President's Public Chamber in Moscow on Saturday [27 May].

He urged all national political and public forces to take part in the elections. According to him, a conference commission has already "completed work on a new version of the State Duma election bill, vetoed by President Boris Yeltsin these days." Filatov voiced confidence that the amended bill would be signed into law.

"The public accord, signed a year ago, has guaranteed the holding of parliamentary and presidential elections on time," Filatov said, adding that thanks to the implementation of the accord, "the situation has stabilized, and the state integrity of Russia has been retained."

"Now Russia is going through a period of transformations, unique in its historical significance," Filatov said.

He noted that the president and the government would spare no further effort to restructure the excessively militarized industry, curb organized crime, build an equal and durable federation, and devise a system of social guarantees.

At the same time, he admitted growing social unrest in some regions of Russia. He blamed the social tension mainly on the government, which, as he said, "has never settled the insolvency problem, nor has it adopted all measures to ensure the payment of wages at enterprises on time." "All society may suffer from a rise in the strike movement, which has increased nearly 50% over a year," Filatov warned.

He also pointed to "the immense danger of political extremism," which finds its expression in the outright propaganda of Nazism and in fanning up ethnic strife. "We should resolutely rebuff" the enemies of democracy, the presidential administration chief stressed.

No Leader Seen Able To Unite Democratic Movement

LD2605142295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1250 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 26 (INTERFAX) — There is no leader in Russia at present who can unite the democratic movement, said Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council Valerian Viktorov who earlier participated in the movement.

"Neither Yegor Gaydar, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy nor Boris Fedorov are suited for the role of uniting democrats," he told an INTERFAX correspondent at a briefing in Moscow today.

Viktorov said the present situation in the democratic movement could be described as "disorder and instability." He said there had turned out to be too many leaders in the democratic movement who listen to no one but themselves.

Viktorov said he was afraid that because of the "disintegration" of the democratic movement "Democrats will be left having to share the same electorate" as a result of which "we could lose the democratic part of the parliament." He said Democrats would certainly be represented in the parliament "but their authority and weight will be so small that they will cease to play an important role in the new parliament."

Viktorov said that if members of the democratic movement failed to reach a compromise in the remaining time, unite and face the elections in a single bloc they would definitely lose.

Viktorov said that the situation was much better for the Communist and Agrarian parties as well as for the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia which have leaders.

Presidential Edict Seeks To Accelerate Judicial Reform

MM2905090595 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 May 95 First Edition p 3

[Edict of the Russian Federation President "On Certain Organizational Measures To Accelerate the Implementation of Judicial Reform in the Russian Federation," dated 23 May 1995 and signed by Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin]

[FBIS Translated Text] In order to create the necessary conditions for the activity of the Russian Federation judicial system in accordance with Article 124 of the Russian Federation Constitution, **I decree**:

1. The Russian Federation Government:

is to determine within a two-month period, in collaboration with the Russian Federation President's Judicial Reform Council and the Russian Federation Council of Judges, the scientifically justified norms in respect of the workload on federal court judges and the norms of material and technical provision for the federal organs of judicial power, and, on their basis, to calculate the federal budget funds needed for the efficient execution of justice, including expenditure on increasing the TO of judges, their material backup, the social protection of judges and their families, the construction and re-equipping of court buildings, the allocation of new courtrooms and the reequipment of existing ones, the fitting of technical equipment in courts, the labor remuneration of court personnel, and the payment of jurors and people's assessors;

is to envisage, during the preparation of the draft federal budget for next year, the priority funding for federal courts in accordance with the aforesaid calculations and taking the opinion of the Russian Federation President's Judicial Reform Council and the Russian Federation Council of Judges into consideration.

2. Leaders of organs of executive power of Russian Federation components are to ensure, by 1 October 1995, the provision of suitable buildings for the execution of justice, in line with the high prestige of judicial authority, to those courts which are located in premises not adapted for their work.

The leaders of organs of executive power of Russian Federation components are to be held personally responsible for the unconditional implementation by 1 October 1995 of Point 1 of the RSFSR President's Directive dated 3 September 1991 No. 32-rp "On Urgent Measures to Improve the Work of RSFSR Courts."

[Signed] Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin

Moscow, the Kremlin

23 May 1995

No. 521

Media Issues

Government To Prop Up NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA

LD2705124795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1221 GMT 27 May 95

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 27 (ITAR-TASS) - The Russian government intends to prop up the daily "Nezavisimaya Gazeta" which has come to a halt because of financial reasons.

ITAR-TASS was told today by sources in the governmental apparatus that Chernomyrdin would make a statement about it in Vnukovo-2 airport before leaving for Sochi for a two-week holiday.

The prime minister is also to outline the government's view of problems of Russian media.

Chernomyrdin plans a brief tour of the Stavropol territory during his holiday.

He is to meet in Stavropol delegates of the territorial branch of the Russia - Our Home movement of which he is the parent.

Chernomyrdin will meet in his Sochi residence ministers and departmental chiefs to coordinate the work of his cabinet, ITAR-TASS was told by the premier's press secretary Viktor Konnov.

MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS To Set Up IMKA News Agency

MK2605123095 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 26 May 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Quality News of Top Freshness Category"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Urgent!

A report of special importance.

To all mass media, state and commercial structures, resident agents of foreign special services.

The news service of MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS opens a news agency named IMKA for you. We will provide you with the freshest possible news every day from early morning to late at night! Only in IMKA will you see exclusive information from the corridors of power and government offices, prompt reports about the most significant goings-on in Moscow and all of Russia, information on the latest events in the country's public and political life, and many, many other things. Recognized professionals of the news genre — reporters of the "Print Urgently!" rubric — will work for you in IMKA.

Initially the IMKA news agency will disseminate its news bulletins free of charge. To receive them regularly, however, you should contact us on the phones 256-95-81 or 256-92-05; by fax 259- 46-24; or E-mail vvj@inf.mk.msk.su.

Military & Nuclear Issues

Missile Troop Leader Details Status of Missiles in CIS

LD2605200395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1847 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 26 (INTERFAX) — Russian strategic missile command has good relations with the General Staff of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry, Colonel-General Viktor Yesin, head of the Russian Strategic Missile Troops (SMT) staff, said Friday.

He spoke at the first ever meeting with journalists organized at the SMT Central command post situated in the Moscow area. Yesin said that 93 strategic missiles still remain in Ukraine under the operative control of the Russian command.

These nuclear missiles are to be dismantled under START 1. Yesin said that their warheads are expected to be destroyed by June 1996, and the missiles themselves, as decided by the Ukrainian authorities, will be gradually reduced within seven years.

He said that all nuclear arms had already been brought back to Russia from Kazakhstan, and the missiles will be destroyed before the end of 1996.

Yesin also said that by that time no missiles will remain in Belarus. There are currently 18 there now. All of its nuclear arms will be brought to Russia this year.

New Aircraft Crashes on Test Flight Near Moscow

LD2905142795 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 1354 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An M-15 aircraft crashed today during flight testing at Zhukovskiy airport near Moscow, the INKA agency [name as heard] was told at the

Moscow Region civil defense headquarters. The aircraft fell straight onto the runway. According to initial information, one person was killed — the pilot. The aircraft was an experimental model and was undergoing its first tests.

Sovkovets Visits 'Top Secret' Kazan Aircraft Plant

MM2605112995 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1900 GMT 23 May 95

[From the "Vesti" newscast: Video report from Gorbunov aircraft plant in Kazan by A. Kondulukov, identified by caption]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Kondulukov over video of Soskovets arriving at aircraft plant] The second day of Russian First Vice Premier Oleg Soskovets's visit to Tataria took place under the sign of the sword and the plowshare — the defense industry and conversion. In the morning he visited the Kazan aircraft plant named for Gorbunov. This is a top secret enterprise. [A hand shoots up in front of the camera] Behind the security guard's hand are Tu-160 strategic bombers and product No. 45 —the Tu-22 aircraft which is produced here. Military production has decreased by more than a factor of six in recent times. Civilian production is only just being organized. Preparations are under way to produce the Tu-204 and Tu-330 here. The problem is a characteristic one for the defense industry. There is no money. Oleg Soskovets, members of the government delegation, and local leaders discussed the inclusion of the aircraft plant in the Federal Conversion Program.

Incidentally, the Kazan Aviation Production Association is not the only enterprise experiencing difficulties. At today's meeting in the Kazan Kremlin all Tatarstan defense industry representatives were complaining about having to pay exorbitant interest on commercial credits, about sharp reductions in the defense order, and about delays in payments for output which the Defense Industry is still accepting.

Finally a word about taxation. Defense industry enterprises are obliged to maintain mobilization potential and at the same time to pay for the equipment which is standing idle.

The vice premier listened to all the complaints and promised that obvious misunderstandings would be eliminated and that defense industry enterprises would be allowed more independence.

Tonight Oleg Soskovets arrived in Mariy-El. His agenda includes the selfsame issues pertaining to machine building, power generation, and the defense industry. [video shows Soskovets arriving at Kazan plant, aircraft on shop floor obscured by security guard's hand, Tu-160 in flight during Victory Parade in Moscow, civilian aircraft; meeting at plant and with local leaders, press conference, Soskovets arriving in Mariy-El]

Il-86 Airplane Goes Out of Production

LD2905121695 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 1000 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Series production of the IL-86, the first Soviet wide-fuselage airplane, has been ended. The POSTFACTUM agency learned this from Radiy Popkovskiy, the chief designer.

The plane was produced by the Voronezh Aviation Works. A total of 100 planes were built. In 1994, series production of the IL-62-M long-distance plane was ended. The plane has become obsolete and there are no orders for it, the designer said.

Northern Fleet Preparing To Launch Satellite

LD2905100495 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Northern Fleet is preparing a space experiment. As part of a Russo-German project it has started preparing to launch into near-Earth orbit an artificial satellite which it is planned to use for the first ever launch of a missile by satellite from a submarine. Our correspondent Yuriy Arkhipov reports that the launch is scheduled for 6 June in the Barents Sea.

Stolen Uranium Parts Said Able To Be Bought Legally

MK3005105095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 30 May 95 p 6

[Report by Stepan Buylo under the "Radiation" rubric: "Uranium 'Tablet' Thieves Were Banging on Open Doors"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian and German special services continue their operation to detain those involved in the theft of fuel elements for nuclear power plants. In Moscow Oblast, they have chosen the Elektrostal Engineering Plant, which assembles fuel elements that are also called "uranium rods."

At the end of last week, officers of the Federal Security Service and the Main Administration of the Russian Internal Affairs Ministry detained the chief engineer of the "Mobrez" small enterprise and an operator of the "Engineering Plant" joint-stock company. They have been exposed as those who stole 11 kg of "tablets" (components of fuel elements) containing a small quantity of uranium-235. To all appearances, they mistakenly thought that the value of what they had stolen runs into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. According to "Atomeksport" catalogues, however, the cost of the stolen elements does not exceed $200. As a matter of fact, it should be added that this respected organization offers these raw materials to all wishing to buy them on fully legal grounds.

Federal Assembly

Duma Condemns Croatian Military Offensive

MM2605111995 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA First Edition in Russian 26 May 95 p 5

["Statement of the State Duma 'On the Deterioration in the Situation in the Republic of Croatia,'" preceded by State Duma Decree No. 770-1 SD "On the Statement of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly 'On the Deterioration in the Situation in the Republic of Croatia,'" signed by State Duma Chairman I.P. Rybkin in Moscow on 17 May 1995]

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly resolves:

That the statement of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly "On the Deterioration in the Situation in the Republic of Croatia" is adopted.

[Signed] Chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly I.P. Rybkin.

[Dated] 17 May 1995, Moscow, No. 770-1 SD

Statement of the State Duma on the Deterioration in the Situation in the Republic of Croatia

The State Duma of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly resolutely condemns the military offensive undertaken by government forces of the Republic of Croatia in the region of Western Slavonia at the beginning of May 1995 in violation of the 29 March 1994 Cease-Fire Agreement. These actions have provoked another round in the escalation of tension in the Balkans and led to new casualties among the civilian population. Attempts to resolve the problems that exist in the Balkan peninsula by military means are unacceptable, and seriously complicate the search for ways to achieve a just, long-term peace in the long-suffering land of the former Yugoslavia.

The deputies of the State Duma express serious concern at the gross violation of the rights of the Serb population of Western Slavonia and demand that the authorities of the Republic of Croatia observe those rights scrupulously. Persons committing war crimes against the civilian population in the zone of the military operation conducted by Zagreb should appear before the international tribunal for the judicial prosecution of persons responsible for the violation of international humanitarian law on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

The State Duma, welcoming the agreement reached between the authorities of the Republic of Croatia and Krajina on the total cessation of hostilities in Western Slavonia and other regions of the Republic of Croatia, calls on all sides strictly to fulfill these accords and not to take any rash steps that could lead to new bloodshed.

The deputies of the State Duma express support for the servicemen who are fulfilling their duty in the Russian battalion of UN peacekeeping forces in the demarcation zone in Croatia. The State Duma believes that any provocations against the UN peacekeeping forces in the former Yugoslavia should be resolutely suppressed, and in the event of the emergence of a threat to Russian soldiers' lives the Russian Federation Government should be prepared to conduct an independent operation to pull the Russian subunits in the UN peacekeeping forces out of the conflict region.

The State Duma demands the immediate withdrawal of Croatian government troops to their starting positions in accordance with the 29 March 1994 Cease-Fire Agreement, and calls on the warring parties to continue talks with a view to preventing a resumption of hostilities along the entire demarcation line in the Republic of Croatia, and also in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, for the sake of achieving a peaceful settlement of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia on the basis of the principles and norms of international law and observance of the rights of all peoples living in the Balkan peninsula.

Shakhray Addresses Duma Commission on Chechnya

LD2905163395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1348 GMT 29 May 95

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow May 29 (ITAR-TASS) — "The effort to force Russians out of Chechnya was started long before the Dudayev regime came to power, but during that regime the process assumed a massive character", holds Sergey Shakhray, Russian Deputy Prime Minister. He said this addressing on Monday an open meeting of the State Duma's commission for investigating the causes and circumstances of the crisis in Chechnya, devoted to the study of the situation regarding human rights in the Chechen Republic in 1991-1994.

According to the information cited by Shakhray, there were 376 thousand Russians in the Chechen territory in 1970. Their number shrank to 230 thousand by 1989.

Human rights violations in Chechnya were also manifested in the fact that in three odd years there have been no legitimate bodies of power in the republic, the constitutional principle of people's power in Chechnya was violated. The issuing in Chechnya of false aviso [as received] to a total sum of 10,000 billion roubles also infringed Russians' rights by undermining the economy and increasing inflation.

Shakhray admitted that prior to the beginning of hostilities in Chechnya the Federal authorities have not taken the necessary steps to form public opinion regarding the situation in Chechnya in Russia and in the world. Meanwhile, the Dudayev regime upon coming to power launched a broad campaign to present Chechnya as a tiny proud highland republic against which huge Russia uses its entire might.

In this connection Shakhray noted that due to an effective information policy, the United States is viewed by the world as a guarantor of human rights, despite its invasion of Grenada and of Panama.

The official stand of the Russian leadership regarding events in Chechnya was represented, specifically, in last year's message of the head of state to the houses of the Federal Assembly, Shakhray said. He noted that the document envisaged resolving the conflict by the separation of powers of the central and local authorities, as well as by the holding of free elections in Chechnya. Now it remains to see whether these provisions have been implemented.

Official Reports to Duma on Chechnya POW's

LD2605185995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1724 GMT 26 May 95

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 26 (ITAR-TASS) — A total of 243 Russian servicemen have gotten missing in Chechnya during combat operations, first deputy head of the Russian General Staff's Main Operational Department Leontiy Shevtsov told Duma deputies today. He was invited to attend a Duma plenary with a report on the search for the MIA.

According to military information, about 90 of the MIA are kept by Dudayev supporters as POW. Some 161 Russian servicemen have been freed from Chechen captivity during the combat operations.

Both the Defence Ministry, the Federal Security Service and the Interior Troops are tackling the POW problem. All negotiations with Dudayev supporters start with this very issue. The Russian government has allocated enough money to pay for liberation of Russian POW, said Shevtsov.

Deputy Interior Troops commander Stanislav Kovyn reminded parliament members that an interior battalion was blocked by the militants on December 11, 1994, in the area of the Daghestani Khasav-Yurt settlement by militants covered by a 5,000-strong crowd of local residents, and 58 servicemen were captured. A total of 38 of them were quickly freed, but the rest 20 were taken to Chechnya and passed over to Dudayev. Sixteen of them have been freed as result of negotiations. Three officers are still in captivity, one officer — captain Romanov — was executed, his body brought to the area of location of a federal unit.

In the words of Kovun, during the negotiations on liberation of the interior troopers he asked for assistance visiting chairman of the presidential commission for human rights Sergey Kovalev. However, the latter shrink from assistance being more concerned with the fate of Chechens staying in the Nazran ward.

Another three interior troopers were recently captured in Chechnya to make the overall number of interior POW six.

Deputy Russian Prosecutor General and Chief Military Prosecutor Valentin Panichev said more than 200 unidentified dead bodies of Russian servicemen have been brought from Chechnya to Rostov-on-Don to stay there.

Duma Adopts Law on Deployment of Peacekeepers

LD2605131095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1234 GMT 26 May 95

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 26 (ITAR-TASS) — The state Duma has adopted the law today "on the order of Russia's assigning military and civilian personnel to take part in operations for maintenance or restoration of international peace and security."

This law was adopted taken into account the president's amendments made by the president after he had turned down the initial draft. The law envisages that a resolution on dispatching Russian military contingents beyond the borders of the Russian Federation to take part in compulsory international operations involving the armed forces shall be passed by the president on the basis of a resolution passed by the Federation council and in line with an international treaty which was either ratified or came into effect, or in accordance with a

Federal law if no international treaty was envisaged. A corresponding resolution to this effect shall be adopted by the Russian president on the consent of both chambers of the Federal Assembly.

The law envisages that the military personnel dispatched to take part in peace-keeping operations shall be deployed on a voluntary basis and consist of servicemen drafted on a contract basis to ensure that peace-keeping contingents consist of servicemen possessing sufficient expertise and military skills.

Duma Hearings on 14th Army's Future Reported

MM2605131195 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA First Edition in Russian 26 May 95 p 2

[Report by Sergey Karkhanin: "A Sentry at the Arsenal. General Lebed Reports to Parliament"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The guns have been silent on the banks of the Dniester River for almost three years now: The peacemaking and intermediary roles played by the Russian diplomats and military have been bearing fruit. As noted in the State Duma hearings on the situation in the Dniester Region and the problem of Russia's 14th Army, however, the conflict cannot be considered settled once and for all. That is why the intergovernmental agreement signed in October by Russian and Moldovan leaders clearly states that the army's withdrawal from the region is scheduled to take three years following the document's ratification by the lower house of parliament and is to be synchronized strictly with the solution of the question on the Dniester Region's legal status.

The agreement has not yet been sent to the Duma for ratification, but talks between Chisinau and Tiraspol have essentially been suspended. President Mircea Snegur, when signing the protocol on the possibility of the Left Bank's state-legal status, felt it expedient to "take a step back," and the project prepared by the Moldovan parliamentarians for the Dniester Region now envisages a broad autonomy — that is all. Tiraspol fears that even such a half-hearted law could if necessary be unilaterally revoked by the Moldovan side so that there is no point in agreeing to it.

If that is really the case, clearly the politicians must make new efforts to find room for compromise.

When addressing the parliamentary hearings, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Krylov noted in particular that the 14th Army is still playing an exceptionally important stabilizing role in the region and that there can be no question of the troops' immediate withdrawal. At the same time, the Foreign Ministry spokesman stated that Russia's prestige in the world will rise when the 14th Army leaves. On the other hand, Lieutenant General Aleksandr Sokolov, deputy commander in chief of Ground Forces, said clearly on the Defense Ministry's behalf that no practical steps to withdraw the army will be made as long as Moldova shirks the commitment made in the intergovernmental agreement on shared participation in the construction of housing for Russian officers in their new locations.

At the same time, as the hearings noted, Chisinau is claiming more than one-third of the 14th Army's property, Moldovan armed forces are constantly holding tactical exercises, and Moldova is stubbornly rejecting the idea of creating a demilitarized zone along the Dniester River.

Army commander Aleksandr Lebed arrived in the parliamentary hall accompanied by the customary herd of newspaper and television cameramen snapping him as though he were a top fashion model and, when asked to speak, delivered an almost 30-minute monologue in which he gave some very colorful views on what were extremely mundane matters. It turns out that he is particularly concerned about the fate of the 14th Army's command, which is due to be almost halved according to the Defense Ministry directive. The army commander essentially dismissed the case presented by Gen. Sokolov, who argued that there was no reason to maintain such an enormous command staff for the few subunits that remained. The army commander then waved his huge fist and said that he would use it to sort out anyone who encroached on the army's property and weapons, and with that he left the hall.

Meanwhile, the discussion of the essential matter was only just beginning. It turned out that there are various solutions to the problem as long as people do not restrict themselves to "confrontational" approaches. The 14th Army could be used to boost the contingent of peacemaking forces on the Dniester River or serve as the foundation of a Russian military base. A Russian consulate could be opened in Tiraspol to grant Russian citizenship to those who want it, which would provide them with a guarantee of their civil rights for the future. Quite a few useful ideas were expressed — by deputies, experts, and representatives of government departments. One such idea, the technical aspects of which have already been outlined, was expressed by Vitaliy Karpov, director of the "Nitrovzryv" Joint-Stock Company, who visited the Dniester Region with a parliamentary delegation. He believes that it would be too dangerous and too expensive to try and shift 2,000 freight cars of 1937-vintage mines from the depots in Kolbasna — it will cost 50 billion rubles. It would cost only half as much and be far easier to recycle such munitions at local metallurgical plants and use the nonferrous metals produced by the in-depth processing of these deadly antiques to supply the industrial needs of Russia, Moldova, and the Dniester Region.

Such unorthodox methods could ease the difficult plight of the Russian fighting man whose duty is to watch not only over peace, but also the old military arsenals filled to the rafters with weaponry.

Duma Cites Human Rights Violations in Kazakhstan

LD2605131695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1306 GMT 26 May 95

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 26 (ITAR-TASS) — "The State Duma draws the attention of world public opinion to the flagrant arbitrariness perpetrated against Russian fellow-countrymen and citizens of Russia in the Republic of Kazakhstan," says a statement "On the Violation of the Basic Rights and Freedoms of Russian Fellow-Countrymen and Citizens of Russia in the Republic of Kazakhstan", adopted today by the Lower House of the Russian Parliament. The document was submitted to the Duma by its Committee for the affairs of the CIS and contacts with fellow-countrymen abroad. It was seconded by 277 Mps. Two members of the Duma have abstained during the voting. Nobody voted against it.

The Duma members believe that this arbitrariness is confirmed by the "preventive" arrest of Cossack leaders V. Achkasov, N. Gunkin, V. Mikheyev, and N. Shibanov, by the detainment and jailing of leader of the Russian community in Northern Kazakhstan, prominent human rights champion and journalist B. Suprunyuk, sentenced to a 2-year prison term, and by the April 29 brutal murder in the village of Krasnaya Polyana of election commission chairman Itterman for his refusal to rig up the results of the referendum on the extension of the office term of President Nursultan Nazarbayev until the year 2000.

"The terrible truth about the tragic lot of our fellow-countrymen in Kazakhstan is that they are forced to stand up for their ethnic origin and human dignity, and that they are subjected to persecutions, cruel repressions, and even put to death for this," the statement stresses. The attempts of the Kazakh authorities to ignore these acts of lawlessness are absolutely irrelevant. They are intended to mislead world public opinion.

The Duma members, the document says, "declare in earnest that the Kazakh authorities have still not realised the responsibility they bear for the possible irreparable consequences of their unlawful and inhuman actions". Nevertheless, the Duma expects the Kazakh authorities to "stop all repressions against the Russian compatriots and Russian citizens, to take immediate steps to investigate the reasons behind the brutal murder of our compatriot Itterman, and to release Russian citizen B. Suprunyuk".

"Only the good will of the Kazakh authorities, their responsible and strict adherence to the commitments assumed under inter-state agreements can still save the existing level of stable bilateral relations," the statement notes.

Duma, Yeltsin 'Bargaining' Over Election Law

MM2605144395 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 May 95 p 2

[Report by Sergey Chugayev: "Duma and President Close to Compromise"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Contrary to expectations, the activity of the conciliation commission set up in the Duma after it had failed to overrule the president's veto on the law on elections to the lower chamber has proved to be relatively effective. At the very first session, both the president's representatives and the Duma side took a number of major steps to accommodate each other. A compromise could finally be achieved in the near future.

On the first day of talks, 25 May, the presidential side dropped demands to deem the elections valid if not less than 50 percent of voters took part, and agreed to adopt the Duma's proposed 25-percent barrier (it is not ruled out that the same barrier could be set for the presidential elections). The president's representatives also dropped the proposal to hold the parliamentary elections in two rounds.

The Duma representatives, in turn, expressed readiness not to insist on compulsory resignation from their jobs by civil servants and journalists participating in the election campaign. Thus, the last stumbling block was the principle of the correlation between deputies for single-seat districts and deputies elected on party lists. However, it is expected that agreement will most likely be reached here, too, especially since an increase in the number of single-seat deputies in the future Duma is not advantageous to either Yeltsin or Chernomyrdin, since it could create the danger of the federal authority becoming dependent on the regional nomenklatura.

In the view of a number of deputies, the conflict over the election law will ultimately be resolved on the following basis: The Duma will adopt, at three readings at once, a supposedly new law on elections and will send it back to the Federation Council. If the upper chamber by any chance rejects it, the Duma will overrule the veto and send the law to the president, who this time will sign it.

At the same time a number of Duma experts think that the real reason for the confrontation between the Duma and the president over the election law does not lie in disagreements over some of its provisions. There is reason to believe that under cover of this conflict, serious behind-the-scenes bargaining is taking place over the law on elections to the Federation Council. In exchange for the president's adoption of the Duma's version of the election law, the Duma is supposed to adopt the president's version of the law on the formation of the Federation Council, stipulating, as you know, not elections, but the appointment of members of the upper chamber.

The complexity of the situation here is that the majority of today's senators are in favor of elections (the heads of regional administrations and regional dumas are at the moment in a minority in the Federation Council). Yet the formation of the upper chamber by means of elections could turn it into a powerful political force independent of the president and the government, which in turn could substantially change the political system that has now become established in the country. That, it seems, is why it is far more important for the president today to obtain the Duma's support on this matter than to insist on relatively insignificant amendments to the law on elections to the lower chamber.

Constitutional Court To Rule on Yeltsin Edict

LD2605145695 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1250 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 26 (INTERFAX) — The State Duma unanimously voted Friday to support a DPR [Democratic Party of Russia] motion and ask the Constitutional Court to rule on constitutionality of President Boris Yeltsin's decree of October 3, 1994 On Steps to Consolidate the Executive Authority in Russia.

The Duma argues that the decree effectively rescinds the October 1991 legislation on election of administration heads and suspends the elections of regional administration heads. They have been elected in as few as 22 out of 89 regions of the country and appointed by the president elsewhere.

Duma Recommends Holding Local Elections in Dec

LD2605145295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English
1343 GMT 26 May 95

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 26 (ITAR-TASS) — The Lower House of the Russian Parliament recommended President Yeltsin to hold the elections of heads of territorial administrations, regions, and cities of federal importance, as well as the heads of autonomous regions and autonomous districts in December 1995, concurrently with the elections to the State Duma. This recommendation is contained in a resolution it adopted today.

An attached explanatory note says that the adoption of this document was necessitated by the fact that the October 3, 1994, Presidential Decree "On Measures to Strengthen the Single System of Executive Government in the Russian Federation" stipulates that the appointment and dismissal of the heads of administrations is to be effected by edicts issued by the President on the recommendation of the prime minister. In accordance with his decree, the date for the elections of the heads of administrations is to be fixed by the President until another procedure is laid down by a Federal law. Thereby, the RSFSR law "On the Election of the Heads of Administrations", fixing the procedure for preparing and holding such elections, was made invalid.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation stipulates that the laws and other legal acts, which were in force on Russian territory before the adoption of the new Constitution, are applicable in the parts that do not contradict it. The law "On the Election of the Heads of Administrations" does not contradict the essence of Article 77 of the Russian Constitution which says that the system of state power in the republics, territories, regions, and cities of federal importance, in the autonomous regions and autonomous districts are to be fixed independently by the subjects of the Russian Federation and "it is unnecessary to adopt other laws, determining the mechanism for the implementation of Article 77 of the Russian Constitution", the explanatory note stresses.

Hence, the document notes, the Presidential decree of October 3, 1994, runs counter to Article 77 of the Russian Constitution, because it puts off for an indefinite period the fixing of dates for the election of the heads of administrations although there is the RSFSR law "On the Election of Heads of Administrations', which does not contradict the Russian Constitution.

Committee Reviews Defense Spending Level

MM2905160595 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 May 95 p 1

[Report by Vladimir Yermolin: "Defense Ministry Funding Lower Than Overall Level of Budget Implementation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Duma Defense Committee has prepared a conclusion on Russian Federation Ministry of Defense funding from January to April 1995. The committee notes that the military department's funding is "lower than the overall level of federal budget implementation for the period under review (24 percent as opposed to 25.4 percent) and is substantially lower than the level of expenditure on law enforcement activity (30 percent)." The conclusion also states that defense industry funding is being carried out "at an intolerably low level and in the period under review did not cover the total debts during 1994."

The committee is proposing to make the following additions to the draft State Duma decree on the results of the implementation of the federal budget in the first quarter of 1995 and on progress in implementing it in the second quarter of 1995:

1. The Russian Federation Government is to:

— Carry out additional substantiation of the components of expenditure on maintaining the Armed Forces, revise the necessary expenditure under the said article of the federal budget, and if necessary submit to the State Duma a draft law "On Making Changes and Additions to the Federal Law 'On the Federal Budget for 1995;'"

— Carry out immediate funding of the defense order in the first half-year at a volume totaling no less than 50 percent of the expenditure envisaged in the federal budget for 1995.

2. The Russian Federation Comptroller's Office is instructed to examine the legality of the targeted use of budgetary resources allocated for national defense, as well as the forms of, and deadlines for, getting the allocated budget appropriations to the end users in accordance with the Federal Law "On the Federal Budget for 1995."

Duma Adopts Law on Guarantees of Legislative Work

LD2605144795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1335 GMT 26 May 95

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 26 (ITAR-TASS) — A law "On guaranteed provision of lawmaking at the Russian parliament" was basically approved by the State Duma today. The document was submitted to the chamber by chairman of the Duma committee for affairs of the Commonwealth and relations with compatriots Konstantin Zatulin.

Under the law, the two parliament chambers, their committees and commissions have the right to invite to their meetings officials from state power bodies, local governments, enterprises, establishments and organizations, and make inquiries within their competence in the established procedure.

Officials invited to meetings of the two parliament chambers, their committees and commissions "shall attend these meetings and give explanations, answers and necessary information on corresponding items of the agenda." Their absence without a good reason and delayed answers to the inquiries shall entail administrative responsibility in the form of a fine varying from 50 to 100 minimum salaries of Russia.

The culprits shall be fined on the basis of a resolution of the Federation Council or the State Duma in due procedure.

The Duma also introduced changes and amendments to the Russian Administrative Code. The Code was supplemented with an article saying that disrespect to the parliament chambers in the form of absence from a meeting of the parliament chambers, their committees and commissions and delayed answers to the inquiries shall be fined at an amount of 50-100 minimum salaries of Russia.

Duma Votes To Raise Pensions Ahead of Schedule

MK2705074095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 27 May 95 p 2

[Report by Natalya Olenich under the "Care" rubric: "Duma Once More Increases Size of Minimum Pension. Pension Fund Deficit Now Stands at R1.8 Trillion"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Pensions continue to remain at the center of close attention of lower house members. This week, the deputies considered two draft laws related to citizens' pension security. On 26 May, a constitutional majority of 300 votes passed a federal [draft] law "On Raising the Minimum Amount of Pensions, a Procedure for Indexation and Recalculation of State Pensions in the Russian Federation." As of 1 June 1995, the minimum pension will be set at 52,486 rubles [R]. Thus, all pensions are being raised by a factor of 1.2 compared against those paid in May.

Anna Vlasova, a member of the Duma committee on labor and social support, thinks that the indicated sum is "a standard that cannot be lowered because even the maximum pension today is below the subsistence wage." The government already spoke out against indexation of pensions in June, as planned by the deputies. The proposed raise, from the point of view of the executive power, violates the procedure established by the law "On State Pensions in the RSFSR," saying that pensions are subject to compensation or indexation once in three months. The previous indexation by a factor of 1.27 was carried out in May; that is to say, pensions are to be revised upward, according to schedule, in August.

Also, the government thinks it "inadmissible to make decisions in the area of pensions if they cannot be backed by corresponding financial resources." The law approved yesterday calls for R2.151 trillion in additional monthly pension outlays. At the same time, according to Pavel Kaminskiy, official government spokesman and deputy minister of social protection, the Pension Fund deficit already totals R1.8 trillion. Already today, pensions are not being paid on time in all regions. The proposed indexation will cause even longer delays. Despite the government's advice that there is simply no money for raising pensions, however, the deputies voted for the law not only in second but also in third reading. Although it is obvious that once the law is through the Federation Council, it will be vetoed by the president.

Despite the traditionally concerted voting for higher pensions, it was found that the deputies categorically dislike high officials who are now on pension. On 24 May, they refused to amend Article 94 of the law "On State Pensions in the RSFSR" to the effect that the time spent by members of the Provisional Administration and of other organs in the state of emergency zone of the Ossetia-Ingushetia conflict be considered, in calculating length of service, as three times longer (that is to say, if one's tour of duty was six months, it should be counted as 18 months). The deputies simply became indignant at the proposal to put on equal footing officials who did not take part in military operations with, for example, participants in the defense of Leningrad. Although this government amendment would not cost the budget anything, as few as 83 people voted for it.

Duma Passes Law on Raising Minimum Pension

LD2605131295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1251 GMT 26 May 95

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow May 26 (ITAR-TASS) — As of July 1 the minimum old-age pension is fixed at 52,486 roubles per month. This is envisaged by the law on raising the minimum pension, the procedure of indexing and recalculating state pensions in Russia that was passed on Friday by the State Duma as a whole.

All pensions calculated in accordance with the Russian Federation's law on state pensions are increased by 20 per cent proceeding from the amount of pensions paid in May, 1995. While the pensions are increased, the compensation payment stipulated under the present legislation is preserved.

The law also envisages that when pensions are appointed or recalculated from June 1, the sums of earnings received by June 1 are indexed with the use of coefficient stipulated for appropriate periods. The sums of earning from June 1 are not indexed. The amount of pensions in this case is not increased by 20 per cent. The established compensation payment is added.

Regional Affairs

Major Earthquake Strikes Sakhalin Island

Early Estimate of 6 on Richter Scale

LD2705154895 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1535 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 27 May — There was an earthquake measuring six points on the Richter scale on the Sakhalin island in the Far East today. It occurred near the town of Okha (northern part of the island). According to the Ministry for Emergency Situations of the Russian Federation, the situation in the earthquake zone is not causing a particular concern. No damage or casualties have been reported.

Dead, Injured Said To Number 2,500

LD2805203195 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1203 GMT 28 May 95

[By correspondent Yevgeniy Belovitskiy]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, 28 May (ITAR-TASS) — Experts have put the number of dead and injured following the devastating earthquake in northern Sakhalin at about 2,500 an ITAR-TASS correspondent was told today at the civil defense headquarters in Sakhalin oblast. [passage omitted]

Dozens of [aid] flights have already been made. Medicines, warm clothing, food and necessities have been taken to the disaster area.

All services of the Ministry of Civil Defense, Emergencies, and Natural Disasters and civil defense along with aviation units and numerous military sub-units are carrying out emergency work.

Yevgeniy Lents, an ITAR-TASS correspondent in Vladivostok, reports that a task force from the Far Eastern regional center for emergency situations is continuing its work in the area of the earthquake. A group of rescue workers from the Pacific Ocean Fleet is preparing to go there. The possibility of using additional technical equipment for rescue work is being investigated. But there are problems getting it to that part of the island where Neftegorsk is situated. Ships cannot get through from either the Sea of Okhotsk or the Amur estuary as they are blocked by thick ice.

Throughout the day, experts registered a further six underground tremors measuring three on the richter scale, but now seismic activity has dropped.

Death Toll Rises to 300

LD2905062395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0537 GMT 29 May 95

[By Yevgeniy Belovitsktiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YUZHNO-SAKHALINSK May 29 (Itar-Tass) — The official death toll of the mighty Sakhalin quake rose to 300 by Monday morning in the town of Neftegorsk.

Vice-governor of the island Viktor Gurevich told Tass that some 3,000 people remain under the ruins of their houses and that groans of people are heard from under the debris.

So far 200 people have been freed from under the ruins, according to Sergey Shoygu, the Russian Emergencies minister.

279 people have been evacuated from Neftegorsk and 176 of them hospitalised. 40 people were hospitalised in the Far Eastern city of Khabarovsk. 26 of them are in very grave conditions and doctors said most of them will have their limbs amputated. 16 people survive only thanks to artificial kidney devices. Four died during the flight to Khabarovsk.

500 people are engaged in rescue work in Neftegorsk.

At Least 938 Survive in Neftegorsk

LD2905155795 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1441 GMT 29 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anna Bakina]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow, 29 May — This morning, 938 people were recorded as still alive in Neftegorsk. The ITAR-TASS correspondent learned this from Aleksandr Tsaregorodtsev, first deputy minister of Health of the Russian Federation. Of these, 238 people with injuries of varying degrees of severity have been sent to the country's hospitals and clinics. Patients with the most severe injuries have been taken to Khabarovsk and Vladivostok. There are 124 victims with injuries of medium severity in the town of Okha. [passage omitted on hospital arrangements]

Ministers Fly to Quake Zone

LD2805194195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1922 GMT 28 May 95

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 28 (Itar-Tass) — A special governmental commission led by First Vice-Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets flew to Sakhalin on Sunday [28 May] to coordinate the rescue efforts and cope with the consequences of a devastating earthquake that hit its northern part last night.

The commission includes Health Minister Eduard Nechayev, Minister of Transportation Vitaliy Yefimov, Minister of Railways Gennadiy Fadeyev and Minister of Construction Yefim Basin.

Minister for Emergencies Sergey Shoygu flew to Sakhalin earlier today to study the situation on the ground and provide urgent aid to the affected area.

Soskovets signed an order obligating the Finance Ministry to provide 30 billion roubles to the Ministry for Emergencies to fund the rescue operations and ensure life-line support for the quake-hit area.

The order also urges the Committee for State Reserves and the Ministries of Transportation and Railways to arrange for the supply of material and technical resources to the region as requested by the Ministry for Emergencies.

The document puts an inter-agency crisis-management commission led by Shoygu in charge of rescue and clear-up operations in the Okha and adjacent districts of Sakhalin affected by the earthquake which measured 7.5 on the Richter scale.

Sakhalin civil defence officials told Itar-Tass today that the casualty toll in what seems to be Russia's worst earthquake ever may reach 2,500. The number of the people killed by the quake is being specified, they said.

The town of Neftegorsk with a population of 3,000 suffered the most and a considerable part of it lies in ruins. The quake destroyed 80 per cent of the buildings in the town, including 19 five-storey apartment houses. Many people were trapped under their debris.

Heavy tremors were also felt in the towns of Okha, Nysh, Aleksandrovsk-Sakhalinsky and Nyvrovo. According to preliminary reports, there has been damage in these towns, but no casualties have been reported so far.

Rescue teams have been sent to Sakhalin from the Trans-Baykal, Kamchatka, Maritime, Khabarovsk and other Far Eastern regions of Russia. Over 200 rescuers and paramedics are now working in the quake-hit area. Injured people are being evacuated to Okha and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.

The rescue operations involve eight helicopters and over 10 planes. Medications, warm clothes, food and basic necessities are being delivered to the region.

Seismologists reported six more tremors measuring up to 3.0 points in the Sakhalin area today.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin sent condolences to the victims of the Sakhalin earthquake on Sunday and ordered urgent aid to the region.

"I have been greatly saddened by the news about the tragedy in Neftegorsk," the president's spokesman Sergey Medvedev quoted Yeltsin as saying in his telegram to Sakhalin administration head Igor Farkhutdinov.

Yeltsin asked Farkhutdinov to take all possible measures to provide the necessary assistance to the population and cope with the consequences of the earthquake.

Soskovets Arrives on Sakhalin

LD2905075395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0504 GMT 29 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, 29 May — A government commission led by Oleg Soskovets, first deputy prime minister of the Russian Federation, arrived in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk today.

On his arrival Oleg Soskovets had a short conference with representatives of the Sakhalin administration, after which he and members of the commission left for the north of the island and the area of the destructive earthquake which has occurred there.

Soskovets Comments on Rescue Operations

LD2905121595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1020 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Neftegorsk, Sakhalin, May 29 (INTERFAX) — First Russian Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets arrived in the Sakhalin town of Neftegorsk on Monday. He said that the rescue operations will go on as long as there is even a slim hope for finding people alive. "We did not expect the situation to be so complicated," said Soskovets.

According to a report by an INTERFAX special correspondent, the earthquake on Saturday night completely ruined the 3,200-person town of Neftegorsk. All apartment houses were devastated. Peoples voices are still heard from under debris. The quake measured nine points on the Richter Scale, reports the INTERFAX correspondent.

In the words of Soskovets, "Neftegorsk devastations are unprecedented. They cannot be overcome in a short time." The railroad was ruined by the earthquake and it will take at least 12 days to repair it, further complicating repair work.

"One can live and work in Sakhalin only in shifts," concluded Soskovets. He instructed the Defense Ministry to assign 200 soldiers more for clearing the town of debris.

The town was mainly the home to workers in the Sakhalinneftegaz production amalgamation, which annually extracted 1.5 million tonnes of oil and 1.5 billion cubic meters of gas. The main gas pipeline was not hurt by the quake but oil supply was suspended due to about 17 breaks in the oil pipeline. The breaks are being repaired.

Sources at the Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Civil Defense Headquarters told INTERFAX that the grave climatic conditions (the night temperatures are often below zero Centigrade) and the lack of technical means makes clearing debris even harder.

"The longer it takes to complete the rescue operations, the more people will die under the debris from the cold," stressed a representative of the Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Civil Defense Headquarters. Access to Neftegorsk is hampered by the lack of an asphalt road to the nearest district center of Okha.

Pipeline Fire Hampers Cleanup

LD2905081895 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0700 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent reports that clear-up work in the Sakhalin earthquake zone is being hampered by a fire on a pipeline near Neftegorsk. In the town, emergency teams of surgeons and other medical specialists have been working together with rescue workers. An announcement has also been made to the population of the need to give blood. Aircraft with medicine and food are flying to Sakhalin from a military airfield near Vladivostok. On their return flight from the island they will evacuate the wounded, women, and children.

Damaged Oil Pipeline Threatens 'Disaster'

LD2905123595 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1020 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 28 (PIA-Interfax) — An oil pipeline damaged by the strong earthquake Saturday night in the areas of Okha and Neftegorsk, Sakhalin, can cause an environmental disaster, a correspondent of the Petroleum Information Agency was told by a spokesman for Sakhalinmorneftegaz oil-extracting association Nikolay Borisenko.

He said the 90 kilometer section between the two towns is broken in more than 15 places. Oil is also leaking from stores of Vostokneftegaz company which prospects and extracts hydrocarbons in the north of Sakhalin.

All boreholes in the quake-stricken area are damaged. The oil pipeline was switched off.

Borisenko said experts will have to define the damages and amount of spilled oil. The total length of the pipeline running from the north of the island to its south-west is about 250 kilometers.

Oil Extraction Possible Cause of Quake

LD2905145995 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1317 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 29 (Interfax) — Oil extraction could have been one of the causes of the destructive earthquake on Sakhalin island Saturday night. This opinion was expressed to Interfax Monday by Chairman of the Russian Expert Council for Forecasting Earthquakes Aleksey Nikolayev.

Nikolayev, also a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, said lengthy oil extraction could trigger off natural processes and provoke earthquakes in this area of high seismic activity.

As another possible cause the scientist pointed to the general rise in seismic activity in the Far East.

According to Nikolayev, this weekend's quake surpasses all earthquakes taken together in the history of Russia. The death toll threatens to reach 2,500 persons.

Nikolayev stressed that a seismological station was closed in Okha a year ago in the absence of funding. He said special geophysical studies to forecast earthquakes were never actually conducted because since the beginning of the century North Sakhalin had registered only slight underground tremors and was considered a safe place. "Earthquakes can be predicted only when special monitoring is conducted," he added.

The scientist did not rule out the possibility of new weaker tremors in the area in the nearest future.

He said: "We know from experience that destructive earthquakes can be followed during several weeks by strong underground tremors in the same area at a distance of several dozen kilometers."

Geologists Deny Oil Extraction Triggered Quake

LD3005105595 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1005 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YUZHNOSAKHALINSK, May 30 (PIA-Interfax) — Experts from the Sakhalinmorneftegazgeologiya prospecting enterprise have described as "absurd" seismologists' fears that drilling for oil was a possible cause of the devastating earthquake in Sakhalin on May 27. The geologists made their statement after the Chairman of the Russian Council of Experts for Earthquake Forecasting, Associate Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences Aleksey Nikolayev told Interfax that prolonged work by the oil industry could have triggered natural processes and eventually brought about earthquakes in a region of high seismic activity. Geologists working on the island say that the center of the quake was at a depth of 150 meters, whereas all extraction was being done at a depth of 6 kilometers. Foreign companies operating on the island say they will refrain from any comments about their future operation in Sakhalin until accurate information is available about the condition of local oil industries after the earthquake. Three off-shore oil and gas projects with the participation of foreign companies are planned near Sakhalin: Sakhalin-1 (the Chaivo, Odoptu and Arkutun-Daginskoye fields), Sakhalin-2 (the Piltun-Astokhskoye and Lunskoye oil fields), and Sakhalin-3 (the Kirinskoye, Yuzhno-Lunskoye and Veninskoye oil fields). An area of 20,000 square kilometers off the island's northwestern coast (Sakhalin-4 project) is to be put up for a tender in July. Sakhalinmorneftegaz experts estimate off-shore oil and gas near Sakhalin at 722 million tonnes and 1.54 trillion cubic meters respectively.

Army Providing Equipment, Personnel

LD2905214795 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1858 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 29 (Interfax) — The Far Eastern Military District has set up an operative group for assistance in the elimination of the after-effects of earthquake in Sakhalin. The district commander, Colonel General Chechevatov has left for the disaster area.

The military district made available 51 items of equipment, 170 tents, 700 ovens, 10 mobile kitchens. As many as 100 servicemen are working in the area, to be joined by another 300 servicemen Tuesday. Local garrisons prepared 2,000 beds for those evacuated. Six aircraft and 16 helicopters are now being used.

In addition, the district airforce formed a transportation group, including the flying hospital Skalpel on an Il-76, six An-12s and six other planes including Il-76, An-26 and An-24 planes. Another 17 aircraft remain in reserve.

Two Il-76 planes loaded with 60 tonnes of relieve aid ordered by the Emergency Situations Ministry will leave Moscow for the disaster area Monday.

Yeltsin Sends Condolences

LD2805124495 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1206 GMT 28 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 28 May—Russian President Boris Yeltsin has expressed his condolences and sympathy to the families of those killed and affected by the earthquake in Sakhalin, Sergey Medvedev, press secretary to the head of state, has told ITAR-TASS. "It is with great distress that I have learned about the tragedy in Neftegorsk," the telegram that Yeltsin sent to Igor Farkhutdinov, head of the Sakhalin Region, on 28 May said.

Yeltsin asked him to take measures necessary to provide help to the population and overcome the aftermath of the earthquake. For this purpose, a government commission has been set up. It is chaired by First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets. To provide urgent help, Minister for Emergency Situations Sergey Shoygu has been sent to Sakhalin, the telegram from the Russian president says.

Yeltsin Declares Day of Mourning

LD3005072595 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0655 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 30 May — Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed an edict today declaring 31 May 1995 a day of mourning in the Russian Federation, the president's press service has reported.

"A powerful earthquake occurred at 1705 Moscow time on 27 May 1995," the document reads, "in Okha District of Sakhalin Region, as a result of which about 3,000 people were killed or injured or are missing. The town of Neftegorsk was almost completely destroyed and the settlements of Moskalvo and Sabo were affected, with the result that hundreds of people were left without a roof over their heads."

After expressing his sorrow for those who died in the cruel natural disaster, the president decreed that Russian state flags be be flown at half mast throughout the country on the day of mourning and recommended cultural establishments and TV and radio companies to cancel all light entertainment features and programs scheduled for that day.

Yeltsin Addresses Nation

LD3005085895 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 0800 GMT 30 May 95

["Address to the Citizens of Russia" by President Boris Yeltsin in Moscow on 30 May — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear fellow countrymen, a great sorrow has befallen the inhabitants of Sakhalin. A terrible earthquake occurred on 27 May in the island's Okha District. About 3,000 people were killed, or are missing, or were injured. The town of Neftegorsk has been wiped off the face of the earth. A number of settlements have been destroyed.

In connection with the tragedy on Sakhalin, I have decided to declare tomorrow, 31 May, a day of mourning in Russia. I grieve for everyone who has died. Dear people of Sakhalin, accept my profound condolences.

I received news of the tragedy on Sakhalin a few minutes after the calamity occurred. Orders were immediately issued to send all possible help to the scene of the disaster and help arrived without delay. The operational forces of the Ministry for Emergencies, the Army, and the Border Guards were activated. Their units are helping to extract people from the ruins, rendering first aid, and building temporary accommodation. The regions of the Far East, Siberia, all of Russia, and, in the first place, the Sakhalin authorities have turned out to help. Measures have been taken to restore communications and transport links. An air bridge has been set up to bring rescue workers and supplies to the area of the earthquake. Field hospitals have been set up.

Emergency help is already being followed by the second rank of support: measures to assist the casualties, to provide equipment and materials, and to allocate funds for social needs and for initial restoration. You are all familiar with our financial problems and the tightness of the budget, but in spite of all that we shall help people who have been cast into adversity. I have today signed an edict that provides for one-off payments to the casualties and to the families of the dead. Each family will receive compensation for material damage up to 50 million rubles. A government commission is operating under Oleg Nikolayevich Soskovets, first deputy chairman of the Russian Government. It is reporting regularly to me on the progress of the rescue work.

We are grateful to the governments of foreign countries — especially our neighbours — who likewise came to our aid without delay.

Esteemed people of Russia, dear people of Sakhalin: The elements are blind and indiscriminate. But it is impossible to take any comfort from this or to grow accustomed to such tragedies. They always shake us, and they always force people to feel closer to each other and to see themselves as members of one family.

I would like to address the rescue workers, those who are searching through the rubble. I know that you are doing everything possible — even more than is humanly possible — but as long as there is still hope I ask you to remember that every hour, every minute may be the last for those who still lie under the wreckage of the buildings.

I once again address my words of sympathy primarily to those whose families are suffering grief, who have lost people close to them, their flesh and blood. It is painful for you, it is very difficult for you. But be aware that all of Russia is with you.

Yeltsin Promises Assistance to Families

LD3005084395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0828 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 30 (Itar-Tass) — President Boris Yeltsin mourned the victims of the Sakhalin disastrous quake, promised relief to the families of the victims and urged rescuers to do everything possible as long as hope remains to find any survivors under the rubble of the town of Neftegorsk.

"I mourn every dead", Yeltsin said in a televised address to the nation Tuesday and extended his deep condolences to the families and relatives of the victims.

He said aid was immediately sent to the disaster area and new assistance is to be shipped.

"Everybody knows our financial difficulties and the tough budget. But we shall help people in distress regardless of that", Yeltsin said and thanked "foreign governments, especially of neighbouring countries, who urgently came to help".

He added that he had signed a decree envisaging 50 million roubles (10.000 USD) of compensation to each family in the disaster area.

"I want to address the rescuers who clear the rubble. I know that you are doing everything that is humanly possible. Still, as hope remains, I ask you to remember that every hour, every minute can be the last one for those remaining under the rubble of the houses", the President said.

"The elements are blind and do not select (victims). But one cannot console himself with that, it is impossible to get used to such tragedies. They are always a shock, they always move people closer to each other, make them feel themselves as one family", Yeltsin said.

"I once again address the words of sorrow to the bereaved families, to those who lost their kith and kin and homes. It is very painful and difficult for you. But remember that the whole of Russia is with you", the President said.

He added that May 31 will be the nationwide day of mourning for the quake victims.

Chernomyrdin Interviewed on Earthquake

LD2905160895 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1400 GMT 29 May 95

["Exclusive" interview with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin by correspondent Arkadiy Melkonyan in Sochi on 29 May; from the "Vremya" program —recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Melkonyan] Viktor Stepanovich, just now the whole country is mourning this tragedy that has happened in Sakhalin. What is the present situation there?

[Chernomyrdin] First of all, I want to say, to express my sincere condolences to all the families and relations of the people that have been killed in that place in Sakhalin, in Neftegorsk. The bad luck was that the tragedy happened on 27 May, on Saturday, at 1 am local time, when, naturally, everybody was already back home.

Essentially everything has been put into action to liquidate the accident. The government and all the ministers...[pauses] All the ministers led by Oleg Nikolayevich Soskovets, have now flown there, and information is being received by the president every 30 minutes. The military, servicemen are taking part, and over 50 pieces of aviation equipment have been mobilized. Unfortunately, everything has to be transported by air, because the roads and bridges have been destroyed. One road from the direction of Okha has been rebuilt.

We are taking measures. They have got everything there now, food, warm clothing, tents, and a hospital has been set up and is already functioning. Yuriy Mikhaylovich Luzhkov told me here that Moscow is already ready to send things there, everything they need. I think everything will be done, of course. But it grieves me that people have been killed.

Chernomyrdin Interrupts Vacation

LD3005111495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1057 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 30 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin will break off his vacation on Wednesday and return from Sochi to Moscow to participate in the work of the State Commission for clearing the aftermaths of the quake in Neftegorsk, Sakhalin region.

Chernomyrdin will be dealing with a number of other important state matters on that day. This was stated by the government information agency of the Russian government staff.

Seismologist Predicts Stronger Quake in Kamchatka

LD3005093895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0925 GMT 30 May 95

[By Anna Bakina]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 30 (Itar-Tass) — "The active period of rupture of the earth's crust in the area of Sakhalin and Kamchatka will set in in 1996-1997. The present quake in Neftegorsk will be eclipsed by a forthcoming one on Kamchatka," Aleksandr Sidorin, head of the regional seismology laboratory at the Earth's Physics Institute, said in an interview with Itar-Tass here on Tuesday.

According to Sidorin, the epicenter of a forthcoming quake on Kamchatka is predicted in near Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy. Therefore, it is necessary even now to carry out work on reinforcing buildings in conformity with seismologists' recommendations. The natural calamity is likely to take place there three years later with force 8-9.

"Reproaches now addressed to seismological services are unjust," Sidorin claimed. "Specialists offer results of their investigations every passing year and demand that buildings be reinforced in cities, which will help to withstand underground shocks.

"However, seismologists' recommendations, as a rule, are not taken into account due to a shortage of funds." Five out of six seismic stations were closed on Sakhalin alone over the past few years. There is a drastic shortage of money for investigations — the result is deplorable.

The quake in Neftegorsk registered force 9 and 7.6 on the Richter scale (magnitude). As for an opinion of some researchers that oil production can provoke quakes, this is partially true. Oil production can provoke minor quakes, but not devastating ones, in some parts of the earth's crust, which are quake-prone.

Specialists now forecast a quake in the Stavropol territory, which is expected several years later. "The territorial administration heeded forecasts this time and is ready to appropriate adequate funds," Sidorin stressed.

Outlays for preventing consequences of earthquakes make up, on the whole, only a tenth of the damage they inflict.

Examining Doctor Says Body Not Cuny's

LD2805164095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1630 GMT 28 May 95

[By Sharip Asuyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, May 28 (Itar-Tass) — The corpse found in Chechnya is not the body of U.S. aid worker Frederick Cuny who went missing in Chechnya in mid-April, a Russian doctor said.

Vladimir Polotnyanko, a traumatologist from Moscow and a representative of the Soros Foundation, who examined the body found near the village of Geldagen said it was not Cuny's body because there was no steel spike in a thighbone.

Polotnyanko's trip to the territory controlled by Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev's militants for the examination of the body had been arranged by Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe's mission in Chechnya.

Dudayev's representative Usman Imayev told Itar-Tass on Sunday that the search for Cuny continued and noted the lack of objective information about him.

Yeltsin Open to Chechnya Talks 'At Any Level'

LD2705153695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1310 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 27 (Interfax) — Russia's President and government are open for talks with Dudayev's adherents at any level, the presidential administration chief Sergey Filatov declared at a session of the Russian President's Public Chamber in Moscow on Saturday.

"The sprouts of peace have already appeared in Chechnya today," Filatov said. However, he added, "no declarations and agreements on peace will work, if either side uses a cease-fire for replenishing its forces and preparing for new battles."

He reported that "federal troops have destroyed more than 100 Dudayev's tanks in the course of fighting in

Chechnya. That invites the conclusion that "someone in the world and in the country wish that the conflict would spread," Filatov said, adding that "due to the openness of Russian frontiers, arms and ammunition have been delivered to militants across mountain passes."

Filatov particularly stressed that resolute actions by the federal authorities "had not only been justified but necessary after power in one of Russia's regions had been taken over by the criminal regime."

Chernomyrdin Releases Chechnya Officials From Posts

LD2605120095 Moscow INFORMATSIONNOYE AGENTSTVO EKHO MOSKVY in Russian 1045 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ekho Moskvy radio station has learned that on 24 May Russian Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin signed an instruction releasing Umar Avturkhanov and Salambek Khadzhiyev from their responsibilities as first deputy heads of the territorial administration of the federal bodies of power in the Chechen Republic.

The same order releases Beslan Gantemirov from his responsibilities as deputy head of the territorial administration of the federal bodies of power in the Chechen republic.

Update on Battlefield Situation in Chechnya

'Unprecedented' Russian Air Attack

LD2605190595 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1800 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Federal troops undertook an offensive in the direction of the built-up area of Serzhen-Yurt today, Ilya Akhmadov, the press attache of the head of the General Staff of the Chechen armed forces reported today.

[Begin Akhmadov recording] The quantity and power of the aircraft used were unprecedented. If you multiply the number of aircraft or raids they carried out on Serzhen-Yurt, it works out that about 240 aircraft dropped bombs simultaneously along with between 50-60 helicopters. They are using fragmentation and vacuum bombs and chemical shells. According to information supplied by our commanders, our losses in the area are 12 wounded and three missing in action. The Russian side has lost between 200 and 250 soldiers and officers killed. [end recording]

A similar offensive was also undertaken in the direction of Agishtiy, Akhmadov claims. However, we have been unable to get this information confirmed from other sources.

One Russian Killed, 7 Wounded in 24 Hours

LD2605221995 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to preliminary information, the losses of the federal grouping in Chechnya in the past 24 hours amounted to one killed and seven wounded, INTERFAX was informed at the press center of the joint command. The losses of the militants are being ascertained.

As was noted, the positions of the federal forces were repeatedly fired upon, including their positions in Groznyy. In turn, as RIA was told at the Russian Ministry of Defense, the joint grouping continues to carry out military tasks in Chechnya in full. The illegal armed formations are being subjected to missile and bomb strikes and artillery strikes. Dudayev's supporters are showing the greatest resistance near the border with Dagestan.

Federal Troops Seize Positions Near Serzhen-Yurt

LD2905144995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1317 GMT 29 May 95

[INTERFAX]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Arshty (Chechnya), May 29 (Interfax) — Russian troops fought their way one kilometer from Serzhen-Yurt, a village 30 kilometers south of Groznyy, and took strategic uphill positions, the Chechen Army Headquarters reported to Interfax on Monday.

A spokesman for the headquarters claims that the Chechen side has shot down two Russian helicopters, destroyed seven armored vehicles, and killed 45 Russian servicemen over the last 24 hours. The Chechen militia losses were 11 killed and the same number wounded, the rebel spokesman says.

Elsewhere along the confrontation line between Russian and Chechen units, the source noted, "fighting continued with varied success."

Meanwhile, the Russian military command regards the Chechen side's reports on federal casualties as "exaggerated." Nor has it confirmed the reported downing of two Russian helicopters.

294 Chechens, 3 Russians Killed Over Weekend

LD2905195795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1940 GMT 29 May 95

[By Olga Semyonova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 29 (Itar-Tass) — Two hundred and ninety-four Chechen fighters were killed, and one tank, four APCs, 23 cars, a grenade-launcher, a machine-gun, an antitank guided missile, an observation post, a strategically important command post, six strong points, and an ammunition depot were destroyed by federal troops over the weekend, Tass learnt from a source at the federal troops' command in Chechnya.

Three Russian servicemen were killed and six wounded, the source said.

Road police officers and task force escorted 32 passenger and cargo trains, with no incidents reported.

Gen Kulikov Returns To Head Joint Forces

LD3005104995 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1005 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, May 30 (Interfax) — The Commander of Interior Ministry troops General Anatoliy Kulikov returned Tuesday to the leadership of the joint federal force in Chechnya. He told Interfax that Colonel-General Mikhail Yegorov, who took Kulikov's place in mid-April, was only substituting for him. Kulikov announced that the operation to oust the militants from the foothills launched on May 24 will continue till the complete implementation of the presidential decree on the restoration of constitutional order in Chechnya.

According to him, since the beginning of the operation federal troops advanced from several to more than 10 kilometers on different sections of the southern direction. Attacks are concentrated in the direction of Agishti and Vedenskoye. The commander did not rule out the possibility of talks with militant leaders on a large-scale settlement of the Chechen conflict. He stressed that only disarmament and the disbandment of the units of militants can be the subject of possible meetings.

Roundup of Latest Developments

MM3005105995 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 30 May 95 p 3

[Report by Boris Soldatenko: "Chechnya: Chronicle of Events"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As was to be expected, the talks which were held at the end of last week under the auspices of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] were adjourned indefinitely due to the impossibility of reaching a compromise. Dudayev's supporters continue to insist on a cease-fire and withdrawal of troops from Chechnya, the representatives of the federal authorities and the Committee of National Accord demand an unconditional laying down of arms. Despite the fact that so far the sides have not reached agreement regarding the ways to achieve a peaceful settlement, it was decided to continue the dialogue in the next few days. So far, peace and tranquillity are far removed from the Chechen Republic. Illegal armed formations cornered in the mountains are the targets of rocket and artillery strikes. Russian troops are establishing themselves on the dominant heights. Dudayev's men are offering the fiercest resistance near the border with Dagestan, close to the population center of Dachu-Borzoy, and near the population centers of Shatoy, Vedeno, Nozhay-Yurt, and Miskhety. Lieutenant Colonel Vasiliy Panchenkov, staffer of the Russian MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] Internal Troops Press Service, told the editorial office that on 28 and 29 May federal troops surrounded bandit formations at the population centers of Gudermes, Shali, Novyye Atagi, and Germenchuk, blocked their exit from the gorge in the direction of Shatoy, and are interdicting any attempts by the gunmen to regroup in the foothills. For the time being it is unclear why on 28 May one of the Dudayev's subunits launched a psychological attack against federal troops 5 km south of the population center of Shali. But, having suffered significant losses, the bandit formation was forced to retreat.

According to Russian Federation MVD Internal Troops Press Service reports, during the last 24 hours federal troops in the zones of combat operations destroyed 19 gunmen, discovered and destroyed an arms dump, and disabled 3 armored personnel carriers, one tank, and one motor car belonging to the enemy.

The situation remains alarming also in population centers liberated from Dudayev's men. Unfortunately, Groznyy is no exception. More than 200,000 persons have returned there as of today, but it is nonetheless difficult to restore normal life in the city. During the hours of darkness gunmen shoot at military command posts and checkpoints and lay mines in the vicinity of important industrial and national economic installations. Just in the recent past engineering troops from the Combined Grouping of Russian Forces have defused about 60,000 mines on Chechen territory.

Yekaterinburg By-Election Aborted by Low Turnout

LD2905121995 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1020 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YEKATERINBURG, May 29 (Interfax-Eurasia) — By-election to the State Duma in Yekaterinburg's Ordzhonikidze electoral district did not take place. As Aleksandr Kokotov, chairman of the district's electoral commission, has reported to Interfax with reference to preliminary returns, as little as 10% of the electorate came to the polls.

By election rules, the turn-out must be 25% for a ballot to be considered valid. No more by-election to the State Duma will be held in that Yekaterinburg's constituency until next December, when a new State Duma is to be elected, the Central Electoral Commission has reported to Interfax.

The by-election was held in Yekaterinburg because a member of the Federal Assembly's lower house Yuriy Brusnitsin had taken up a permanent job in the State Duma's apparatus and had relinquished his deputy powers.

The registered candidates were Valeriy Sarvarov, the leader of the Sverdlovsk region's branch of the Russian Communist and Workers Party, Aleksandr Shkolnik, a Moscow TV journalist, and Vladimir Lebedev, the leader of the Sverdlovsk Union of Afghan War Veterans.

Shortly before the vote, Vladimir Lebedev was sentenced to five years in prison for rape and malicious hooliganism. However, since the court's verdict had not take effect before the by-election, he managed to take part in it.

As a working group of the district electoral commission has reported, by preliminary unofficial figures, most votes were collected by Aleksandr Shkolnik, Valeriy Sarvarov - in second place.

According to Kokotov, there was only one serious incident when the district electoral commission was warned about an explosive device, allegedly planted in the building. The commission interrupted its work for a few hours. Police inspected the premises but did not find any booby trap. An investigation is underway.

Economic Issues

Livshits Says Chechen War Affecting Budget

LD3005102295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0949 GMT 30 May 95

[By Tamara Zamyatina]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow May 30 (ITAR-TASS) — Since April the war in Chechnya began to affect the Russian budget implementation, according to presidential economic aide Aleksandr Livshits.

He told TASS Tuesday that the April-May offensive operations in the rebel republic "began to tell on the federal budget".

"From the beginnning of the Chechen campaign (last December) we felt only the psycological pressure of the combat operations on the budget. Now Chechnya began to economically affect the implemetation of the budget", Livshits warned.

First Deputy Finance Minister Vladimir Petrov told TASS Tuesday that only restoration work in Chechnya had demanded 410 billion roubles (80 million USD) in May while the total expenses in 1995 amounted to 1,340 billion roubles (over 250 million USD).

As far as the compensation to Sakhalin quake victims is concerned, Livshits said the 50 million roubles envisaged to every family in the disaster area would not comprise a big total amount as "most of the residents of Neftegorsk have, unfortunately, perished".

Livshits: Economy Showing Signs of Revival

LD3005102795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1012 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow May 30 (ITAR-TASS) — A top economic aide of the Russian President believes the national economy is gradually beginning to get out of the crisis and hopes the transition period will not last long.

"The Russian economy is gradually entering the phase of the so-called zero growth, however, the main problem is how long it would last", Aleksandr Livshits told TASS Tuesday.

He added that the phase, which is also called "depression", is characteristic of any country which is getting out of the economic crisis. "In this period of instability industrial production can either drop by several per cent or, on the contrary, increase by the same figure", Livshits said.

He was commenting on preliminary estimates which showed that the Russian industrial output grew for the first time in May by 2-4 per cent compared to the same month last year.

The growth occurred mostly thanks to export-oriented industries, to the ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, the chemical industry, housing construction. At the same time the production of household appliances decreased.

Livshits said the government plans to support those Russian enterprises which export consumer goods, rather than raw materials.

First Growth in Industry Output Recorded

LD2905095395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0754 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 29 May (BIZNES-TASS) — Industrial output in Russia for the first three weeks of May was 4 percent higher than during the same period of last year, BIZNES-TASS was told by Mikhail Delyagin, acting head of the economics department of the Russian President's analytical directorate.

This is particularly noteworthy, he said, because it is the first time it has happened in the reform era. During the same period last year, industrial output was down 36 percent. Overall industrial output is expected to shrink by at least 4 percent in 1995, but the current expansion demonstrates that Russian manufacturers are to a degree adapting to the prevailing economic climate and points to the real potential for economic growth, according to Mikhail Delyagin.

The increase in output can be seen not only in export-driven sectors such as ferrous metals, chemicals, and petrochemicals, the president's analyst stressed, but also in a number of sectors oriented to the domestic market, in particular, housing construction and related services.

GDP on Rise, Business People Said Adapting

MK3005093095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 30 May 95 p 3

[Report by Galina Kostina under the "Optimism" rubric: "'Menatep' Analysts Think Russian Production Is Adapting to Market. According to Them, Tendencies Have Emerged Toward a Growth in GDP 'Over the Long Haul'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Specialists of "Menatep" bank's Institute of Investment Problems have conducted a study of the state of the Russian economy in the first quarter of the current year. According to their findings, a certain tendency toward growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the long haul has emerged. The year, the experts think, got off to a good start: GDP in dollars (pegged to a more stable base than the ruble) has fallen in comparison with the fourth quarter of last year, but has gone up 10 percent over that year's first quarter. This indicates both seasonal fluctuations in the Russian economy and a certain tendency toward its growth.

The study says that one indication of stabilization of industrial production is that the government's tough monetary policy has had virtually no negative impact on production in the first quarter. In the past, reduced offers of centralized credit and money supply were seen, as a rule, nearly as a catastrophe — enterprises experienced a sharp lack of cash and the nonpayment crisis worsened. Today, the researchers maintain, production has not taken any beating. Thus, they have concluded that under way is an "adaptation of enterprises" to new conditions of economic management, a change in the "psychology of the director corps" and of the managerial staff, who have practically learned how to work in the real free-market space. At any rate, most enterprises have adapted themselves to the absence of the customary cheap injection — centralized credit — showing they can manage without it.

1995 Investment Tender Plans Detailed

LD2905120895 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1031 GMT 29 May 95

[By BIZNES-TASS correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 29 May (ITAR-TASS) — Nearly 1,500 billion rubles [R] are expected to be placed by tender under the federal government's investment program for 1995, BIZNES-TASS was told at the Ministry of Economics.

The ministry has already received tenders for 242 projects estimated to be worth R21,500 billion and requesting R3,500 billion in centrally-allocated funding. Of them, 31 percent concern agricultural industry, 36.4 percent concern the construction industry and chemical processing of timber, and nearly 22 percent are for engineering and metallurgy. The main selection criteria for projects are that they should be up and running and repay their state funding within two years.

Some 70 projects asking for R490 billion in centrally-allocated funding have been forwarded to an expert commission for scrutiny.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the number of bids and their industrial cross-section is that this investment procedure is gaining in popularity with the Russian business community, according to ministry experts.

Compulsory Reserve Contributions Discussed

LD2605174995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1133 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 26 May (BIZNES-TASS) — The leadership of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation (CBR) has decided to issue a new instruction on norms for compulsory reserves for commercial banks no later than the end of June, Inkombank President Vladimir Vinogradov told journalists today. He said the decision was notified to the banking community during the annual congress of the Association of Russian Banks, which took place in Moscow this week.

Vinogradov said the last meeting with Acting Chairman of the CBR Tatyana Paramonova had allowed payments to reserve funds by commercial banks to be postponed. The president of one of the largest Russian banks emphasized that the CBR had introduced sensible rules for compulsory reserve contributions. "These rules are good and educational for clients," he said. Vinogradov thinks, however, that reserve requirements should be increased gradually and rationally.

MiG-MAPO Group Seen as New Departure

MM2605151495 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 20 May 95 p 4

[Article by Candidate of Economic Sciences Aleksandr Vorobyev under the "Financial-Industrial Groups" rubric: "MiG-MAPO: High-Tech Response to the Challenge of the Times" — from the "Aviation in Russia" section]

[FBIS Translated Text] One strategic direction in the restructuring of Russian industry, including the aviation industry, has been the formation in recent years of powerful financial industrial groups on the basis of major enterprises. At present two basic types of financial-industrial groups are being formed. Large industrial enterprises and science and production associations are the basis of the first type of financial-industrial group. The role of financial institutions and commercial structures in the capital of such financial-industrial groups is not usually decisive.

The second type of financial-industrial group is, as a rule, formed by the banks or other major investors from the financial sector. Their organizational structure is usually very close to that of American conglomerates of the early 1970's and 1980's, with all their inevitable structural weaknesses associated with too much dissipation of assets. This is explained by the fact that the banks' ultimate aim is not so much to establish strategic control over some individual sector as to put together a package of stocks in a group of potentially highly profitable enterprises and then resell it to a strategic investor.

Both models of the financial-industrial groups have significant shortcomings from both a macroeconomic and microeconomic point of view.

Financial-industrial groups of industrial enterprises without significant financial assets are rarely able to resolve the problem of investments and retaining sales markets, not to mention the technological modernization of production. As a result, such financial-industrial groups often become an instrument of collective lobbying for individual subsidies and concessions, which destroys the system of state finance.

The banks' financial-industrial groups, which are oriented toward short-term speculation in stocks, are in principle unable to effectively manage long-term production programs due to the high degree of fragmentation of assets in the sector itself.

Taking what has been said into consideration, the high-tech group that is being created on the basis of the "MiG" aviation science and production group and MAPO [Moscow Aviation Production Association] — the chief producer of the world-famous MiG-29 light tactical fighter — seems to be pretty unique and does not fit into the traditional definition of a financial-industrial group.

MAPO is at present consolidating the core of a competitive sector of the Russian economy which is capable of becoming one of the centers of growth and modernization within Russian high technology. According to export sales figures, MAPO is today among the top five major Russian corporations. Moreover, it is the only one of the five producing machinery and technical equipment. Since the company has broken into export markets, it has not only substantially increased its own investment potential but has also gained access to the resources of international capital markets. All this provides an opportunity to implement a financial policy oriented mainly toward the realization of long-term programs in production and the area of research and development.

What are the Moscow Aviation Production Association's aims in setting up the company? One main aim is to implement technologically complex and capital-intensive projects for the gradual modification and thorough modernization of the basic product, as well as for production diversification. The association's priorities in particular include creating a new generation of fighters by the end of the century, producing the new MIG-AT trainer, and producing and exporting forward-looking models of civil aircraft, with the emphasis on aircraft for regional airlines and business aircraft (the Il-103, Grach, "Aviatika," etc.). Under the present circumstances, these tasks can only be carried out if a large scientific production group with a powerful financial infrastructure is set up.

Taking into consideration the company's orientation toward accomplishing complex, long-term technical and production tasks, the principles on which it is founded are vertical integration and the formulation of the most flexible organizational and investment schemes to realize specific projects.

MAPO's many areas of cooperation embracing various sectors of the economy (electronics, armaments systems, telecommunications, and so on) and the consistent implementation of the principle of vertical integration will inevitably lead to the formation of intersector groups with fairly complex structures. This will permit significant areas of various sectors to be drawn into the orbit of a competitive sector, namely MAPO, and at the same time will substantially lower the risk of a break in the chain of production or inflated costs.

The formation of a large aircraft-construction group on the basis of MAPO and the "MiG" aviation science and production group can be considered a priority both from the angle of selective structural industrial policy and that of the methods of organization and the forms and ways of functioning of financial-industrial groups. This project no doubt figures among interregional and interrepublican priorities.

Roskontrakt To Buy Oil Pledged to CIS

MM3005103595 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA First Edition in Russian 25 May 95 p 5

[Russian Federation Government Decree No. 474 "On Measures To Implement Intergovernmental Agreements on the Basic Principles of Trade and Economic Cooperation With Member-States of the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1995," signed by Russian Federation Government Chairman V. Chernomyrdin in Moscow on 15 May 1995 from the "Document" section]

[FBIS Translated Text] With a view to implementing intergovernmental agreements on the basic principles of trade and economic cooperation with member-states of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] in 1995, the Russian Federation Government decrees that:

1. The "Roskontrakt" joint-stock company is to effect the purchase from Russian enterprises and organizations, irrespective of their forms of ownership, of oil and oil products in volumes necessary to implement intergovernmental agreements with CIS member-states, according to the appendix. (Not published).

2. The Russian Federation Ministry of Fuel and Energy is to ensure that the volumes of oil and oil products stipulated in the appendix to this decree are included in the delivery schedules for these products based on the "Roskontrakt" joint-stock company's applications made in accordance with the Russian Federation's commitments regarding interrelated deliveries and certain intergovernmental agreements on the basic principles of trade and economic cooperation with CIS member-states in 1995.

Every month the "Roskontrakt" joint-stock company is to submit to the Russian Federation Government a report on the delivery of the said volumes of oil and oil products.

[Signed] Russian Federation Government Chairman V. Chernomyrdin

State Data on Spring Field Work Evaluated

MM2905155095 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 27 May 95 p 1

[Article by Vladimir Istomin: "Will Sowing Extend Into June?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In fairly recent times, an increasing number of farms, rayons, oblasts, and even whole regions of the Russian Federation would usually, during the last 10 days of May, be reporting the completion of the sowing work. These days, formal reports of that kind do not exist, but, judging by State Committee for Statistics summaries as at 22 May, the pace matches that of the period of "stagnation." The seed drills which had been filled with spring grain crop seeds have left or are leaving the fields in the Central Chernozem, Central, Volga, and even the Volga-Vyatka regions.

Things are not so good in parts of the Northwest, North (apart from the Komi Republic), East Siberian, and Far East regions if, of course, you compare this lag with last season, as the State Committee for Statistics is doing. Not that such a comparison is just: Last year the pace of the spring work was unusually slow. The sowing went on into June, and millions of hectares of plowed land did not even get to see choice grain. Now, May has proved prematurely warm and the sky has not presented the crop farmer with additional obstacles to his eternal spring concerns.

This fact has not been overlooked in the countryside: Sugar beets and sunflowers have been sown and the bulk of the planned areas have been planted with potatoes and vegetables. On the other hand, the situation concerning a traditional Russian crop — flax — is uncertain, and an area of only 138,000 hectares has been devoted to it. Is that a lot or a little? The summary does not answer that question. Admittedly, it is known that, once again, in the recent past, the area occupied by flax used to top the 0.5-million mark during the last 10 days in May. Let us tell readers the final overall figure: In all 44.6 million hectares of spring crops have been sown by Russia's agricultural enterprises — 72 percent of the planned figure.

Now let me mention some difficulties. They are the same as they were at the start of the sowing campaign and will remain so. Some people had no money, so they still have an acute shortage of fertilizer, fuel, and spare parts.... State aid has been purely nominal, although the Russian Ministry of Agriculture and Food and other government structures, in conjunction with what you would have thought were interested departments, hold regular sessions of operations staffs. However, the success of all the efforts has been negligible since floated supply enterprises are virtually disregarding the interests of the countryside in favor of their own purse, notably by exporting goods. Thus, during the first quarter, 2.5 times more fertilizer was sent abroad via the Agrokhimeksport All-Russia Joint-Stock Company than was sold on the domestic market. The government decree on this issue has only been 43-percent implemented. According to reports from the agrochemical service, now is the time for top-dressing strong wheats, for which 50 billion rubles are required. However, this money is not available, and commodity credits by no means always work even with prior payment in cash of some funds.

The same applies to the mechanism for issuing fuel and lubricants. It has only been organized in Ulyanovsk and Belgorod Oblasts; the May schedule has been met here.

Finally, I am bound to mention the preparation of feed harvesters — the time for hay mowing is near, and the grasses in most regions are in good condition. Once again it will only be possible to bring in this harvest in full if there are no holdups with fuel and lubricants and if the equipment is in good order. So far, though, there are no grounds for optimism. The report states that 49 percent of the mowing machines and 45 percent of the feed harvesting combines are ready to take to the fields and meadows — that is not much.

Protection of Domestic Food Producers Urged

MK3005094095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 30 May 95 p 3

[Report by Galina Borisova in the "Protectionism" column: "Domestic Goods Are Being Crowded Out of the Consumer Market. Some Experts Believe That Domestic Food Production Should Be Protected Even If It Is Uncompetitive"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The correlation of imported and domestic goods on the Russian consumer market is becoming increasingly threatening. This is the conclusion reached by specialists at Menatep Bank's Institute of Investment Problems headed by Yevgeniy Saburov in a survey of the economic situation in Russia during the first quarter of this year. The level of consumer goods production in the first quarter fell by 18 percent compared to the fourth quarter of last year, and constituted 38-43 percent of the 1989 average quarter level. The survey shows that one factor having a negative impact on consumer output, along with a reduction in the population's real incomes, is the import of the same types of goods that are produced domestically, which is especially noticeable in light industry. The situation in the food sector is a little better: Food output in the first quarter compared to the fourth quarter of last year shrank by 20 percent.

The massive influx of import is fraught with a lethal outcome for domestic consumer goods producers. Imports have virtually wiped out domestic producers of VCR's, radios, and TV sets. The situation of Russian automobile makers has also worsened. Even such a traditional item of Russian export and an incontestable leader on the domestic market as Russian vodka is being gradually squeezed out by foreign competition.

"Today domestic producers apparently have only one chance to survive: to raise duties sharply on consumer goods imported from abroad," Andrey Chernyavskiy, Institute of Investment Problems department chief and one of the survey's authors, believes. "Because in the foreseeable future domestic producers will hardly be able to reach world standards, they can be helped by the advent to Russia of such major firms as Sony, which could produce TV sets here as it does in Great Britain. True, the likelihood of this happening so far is not great: It is considered too risky to invest in the production of finished goods in Russia."

According to Chernyavskiy, the simple logic — buy abroad what they can do well, and concentrate efforts on what you can do well yourself — does not work in Russia because "the Russian authorities have to take care in protecting domestic producers." This is due to many reasons, key among which is the preservation of production enterprises, hundreds of thousands of jobs, including in related fields, and so forth. "In addition to economic and social considerations, there are also considerations of national security that are especially important in the sphere of food production," Chernyavskiy noted.

Many countries pursue protectionist policy with respect to "their" foodstuffs producers even if they are economically inefficient, the analyst believes. According to him, by buying in Russia Danish ham or Finnish yogurt, Russians undermine their own milk-and-meat industry. Chernyavskiy believes that they should be ready for a situation when "suddenly, for some reason imports are sharply reduced or stopped altogether, and we will have already slaughtered all our Russian cows."

The policy of a price barrier to import and some benefits to domestic consumer goods producers to encourage them to use advanced technology can be used also in Russia, institute experts believe. There are groups in Russia that lobby for the protection of any domestic production, and there can be different attitudes to these efforts. Analysts from the "Saburov group" think that in respect to food production, such a tactic is correct.

True, the authors of the survey realize that any limitation of competition inevitably entails a number of negative consequences, one of which is a kind of an additional tax on society as a whole.

International Affairs

Foreign Ministry Statement on Bosnia Situation

LD2705155995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1523 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev, 27 May, UKRINFORM-TASS — Ukraine is observing the dangerous development of events in Bosnia-Herzegovina attentively. The fact that the participants in the conflict have ignored demands to cease bombarding UN security zones has led to bomb and missile attacks by NATO air power against Bosnian Serb positions in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 836, says a statement by the press service of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued today.

While taking account of the fact that these actions were brought about by exceptional circumstances, Ukraine considers that they have created a dangerous situation for UN peacekeepers within the conflict zone, including for servicemen of the Ukrainian contingent.

Ukraine is calling on the warring sides to respect the international status of the UN peacekeepers who in the most dangerous conditions are doing everything possible to protect the civilian population. Ukraine is calling on the warring sides not to use violent actions against the civilian population, inter alia take hostages, which runs counter to the convention on the protection of the UN personnel, and is a gross violation of the international law.

Ukraine hopes that by joint efforts the international community will succeed in stopping a further escalation of the conflict and in continuing a course toward its peace settlement, using all political mechanisms in line with the UN Charter. Ukraine confirms its readiness to participate in this process, says the statement of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry press center.

Serbs Reportedly Capture 33 Ukrainian UN Soldiers

LD2805153495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1526 GMT 28 May 95

[By Andrey Naryshkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ZAGREB, May 28 (Itar-Tass) — U.N. Protection Force officials in Bosnia said on Sunday [28 May] the Serbs had captured 33 Ukrainian peace-keepers and taken them to the Pale area.

Their fate remains unknown. However, it is believed that the Serbs will try to use the hostages as a human shield against possible NATO air strikes.

The Ukrainian peace-keepers had been seized at the sites where heavy weapons are being kept in the capital's Ilidza district and the village of Krivoglavica, west of the city.

An UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] official said the Serbs are holding 245 peace-keepers and 32 military observers. At least 17 military observers are being held as real hostages to prevent Serb military facilities from air strikes, he added.

Over the last few days, Serb forces seized a number of UNPROFOR vehicles, including armoured ones, and several light tanks belonging to the French battalion.

Ukraine Appeals Against More NATO Air Strikes

LD2905142395 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1200 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — Forty-eight Ukrainian peacekeepers from the 240th Ukrainian Armed Forces special battalion serving in the United Nations Protection Force in Bosnia are being held hostage by Bosnian Serbs. Forty-three of them had been guarding heavy ammunition dumps in Ilidza and Krivoglavci near Sarajevo. The other five served at the checkpoint near the Muslim enclave of Gorazde. The Ukrainian hostages are held near the likely targets of the next NATO air strikes, the Ministry of Defense press service told UNIAN today.

The Ukrainian Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs are taking all necessary steps to secure the release of the Ukrainian peacekeepers and ensure their safety. The Ukrainian side has submitted a proposal to the UN Security Council and NATO leadership against the use of NATO air force, as this could lead to tragic consequences. The Ukrainian proposal is supported by Russia and France, whose servicemen were also captured by Bosnian Serbs.

Zlenko Speaks at UN Security Council Meeting

LD2905103195 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 0915 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no date as received] — Anatoliy Zlenko, Ukraine's permanent representative at the United Nations Organization spoke at a meeting of representatives of the UN Security Council, countries-contributors to the UN peacekeeping forces, and the leadership of the UN Secretariat. He demanded that the UN leadership take immediate measures to ascertain the fate of five servicemen of the Ukrainian battalion who were taken hostage by the Serbian side and bring them immediately to the battalion's deployment site. Zlenko expressed serious concern at the state of security of the UN peacekeeping forces. UNIAN has learned this at the press center of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry.

During the discussion of the latest events on the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ukraine's representative proposed that the UN secretary general and the command of the UN peacekeeping forces consider the consequences of the first two air strikes carried out by NATO and draw conclusions on the expediency of the use of force. He also warned that the current conflict in the Balkans could grow into a full-scale war with the direct involvement of UN troops.

Zlenko familiarized the meeting with the main provisions of a letter sent by Ukraine's Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko to the UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali. The proposals concerning the settlement of the current crisis in former Yugoslavia, set out in the letter, were supported on the whole by representatives of various countries.

Shmarov, Perry Attend Joint Exercises, Address Press

MM2905101295 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 May 95 p 2

[Report by Vladimir Bogdanovskiy: "Ukrainian-U.S. Exercises"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Lvov — The Carpathian Military District's Lvov Training Center has witnessed a host of various exercises, including those involving foreign troops from the Warsaw Pact countries. And now the training center has more foreign guests — from the United States.

This exercise was called "Peace Shield-95." Around 700 servicemen were involved in it. The U.S. side was represented by 300 soldiers and officers from the 3d U.S. Mechanized Division. While 400 servicemen from the Seventh Mechanized Regiment, once known in the Soviet Armed Forces as the 24th Motorized Iron [Zheleznaya] Division, took part on the Ukrainian side.

The exercise began 23 May and will end 28 May. The exercise area was visited by Ukrainian Vice Premier and Defense Minister Valeriy Shmarov and U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry. A press conference was held. When asked whether Ukraine intends to become a member of NATO in the near future, the leader of the Ukrainian military department gave the following brief response: "NATO is a complex subject. It is a difficult business for an army to undergo a radical change of status. Furthermore no one in NATO is particularly waiting for Ukraine."

During these few days there were plenty of meetings and discussions at the test range. The talk turned on several occasions to relations between the Ukrainian and Russian Armies.

"We regret that some coolness has been discerned over the last few years between our states and armies," Colonel General Vasiliy Sobkov commented during a conversation. "But not everything here is dependent on us servicemen. There is nothing for us to share with the Russians. Each of us have many friends there [in Russia]. We have things to discuss. There are plenty of problems on whose resolution we must work together. Take equipment and arms. We, Russian and Ukrainian specialists, together developed and manufactured it [as published; grammatically refers to 'equipment']. And what happens now? Will the Russians now tackle these matters autonomously? Is that sensible? Would it not be better to coordinate common efforts again?"

One can only hope that that is what will happen. Not everyone took an unequivocal view of the exercise itself. Some said: What can we learn from the Americans when they have not completed a single peacekeeping operation successfully. Other complained about individual apparent miscalculations in the troops' actions. While yet others were working out what the exercise will cost Ukraine in terms of "greenbacks." Is it necessary to reach agreement and fly abroad for this kind of exercise? Is it not cheaper to work through these questions with immediate neighbors? Well, there is some sense in each of these opinions.

Scenarios for Joint Exercises

MM2905102795 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 25 May 95 p 3

[Report by Anatoliy Polyakov: "Ukraine and United States 'Fighting' in Naravia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 23 May joint exercises involving Ukrainian and U.S. subunits within the framework of the Partnership for Peace program began on Ukrainian territory near Lvov.

Twenty-five U.S. aircraft delivered to Lvov airfield 50 motor vehicles and around 300 soldiers from the U.S. 3d Infantry Division, which is stationed in Germany. On the Ukrainian side 432 servicemen from the 24th Motorized Rifle "Iron Division", three helicopters, 15 armored personnel carriers, and 46 items of automotive equipment are taking part in the exercises.

The idea behind the exercises is to rehearse joint actions in complex conditions of a military conflict and to hold an exchange of experience on planning peacemaking actions. The exercise scenario is as follows: An ethnic conflict has arisen on the border of the states of Eksklandia and Naravia. Adjacent states have appealed to the United Nations, requesting that troops be brought into this territory. Theirs is the role that will be taken by the Ukrainian and U.S. subunits. The exercises' combat phase will take place 26 and 27 May. It is thought that U.S Defense Secretary William Perry will attend the exercises.

Conclusion of Military Exercises

LD2905163895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1525 GMT 29 May 95

[By Igor Bachun]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LVOV, May 29 (Itar-Tass) - First U.S.-Ukrainian military exercises "Peace Shield-95" ended in Ukraine on Thursday [25 May]. American troops left for their permanent disposition in Germany after six days of joint training with Ukrainians at the Lvov test ground in the Carpathian military district.

Exercises which were held within the Partnership for Peace programme aimed to train participants to perform basic peacekeeping functions in conflict areas. From the U.S. side, they involved 300 servicemen of the U.S. Army third motorized infantry division.

Ukraine for the first time participated in such exercises, the Carpathian military district commander, army colonel-general Petr Shulyak said.

The event evoked much response in the world, he said. The exercises were attended by defence ministers of the USA, Ukraine, Hungary, General Staff Commanders of Slovakian, Polish, Romanian, and Hungarian Armed Forces, the German Land Force Commander, a representative of the Netherlandish General Staff Chief, 19 military attache and other officials. The exercises were covered by over 100 reporters from Ukrainian and foreign mass media bodies.

"We have reached everything we planned," Shulyak said. The exercises helped establish important contacts between Ukrainian and American armies and opened new prospects for their development. "This is a new step in consolidating friendship and mutual understanding between our nations and the most valuable result of joint peacekeeping exercises," he concluded.

Moroz Says Ukraine Will Never Join NATO

LD2905201995 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1845 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — "Ukraine will not join NATO, and neither will Russia," said Ukraine's Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz in an exclusive interview for UNIAN. "The Partnership for Peace formula makes it clear: Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's," the speaker said.

Moroz told UNIAN that he had held that view since 1993 when the Supreme Council approved the country's foreign policy guidelines. Taking account of the objective circumstances, such as the existence of common Ukrainian-Russian air defense and strategic forces, as well as the existence of the Black Sea Fleet on the Ukrainian territory, these relations must be formalized in legal terms, he said. "I am not talking about military blocs or alliances. We need a legal framework for cooperation, including military cooperation, between neighboring countries. Perhaps we need a similar framework with NATO, if you consider the interests of Ukraine and her neighbors who may join the organization in the future."

The parliament speaker said Ukraine had to seek other ways of protecting its interests, by promoting the transformation of the Black Sea region into a zone of peace and reducing confrontation between the military organizations of its neighbor states.

National Affairs

Kuchma News Conference Discusses Current Issues

LD2905191095 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1200 GMT 29 May 95

[News conference given by President Leonid Kuchma in Kiev — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Moderator] Today's news conference of the president of Ukraine deals with the results of his visits to the Latvian and Estonian republics and participation in the conference of the CIS heads of state in Minsk. Leonid Danylovych will first make his assessment of these results and then there will be a question-and-answer session. If there are no objections, let us agree that we will work for 45 minutes in accordance with the procedure. It is your turn to speak now, Leonid Danylovych.

[Kuchma] Esteemed journalists. Much time has passed since our last meeting. Therefore, in order to save your time I will not make an introductory speech, because almost all of you know the content and the results of the negotiations, know who I met and for how long, and what was signed both in Latvia and Estonia, and in Minsk. Therefore, I am ready to get down to business right now. You are welcome to put questions. I think, we will try to understand each other better through questions. Any objections? Go ahead.

[Moderator] Second microphone please.

[Kyselyov] Esteemed Leonid Danylovych, I am Serhiy Kyselyov, Ukrainian office of the LITERATURNAYA GAZETA. During your visit to Latvia you said Ukraine could possibly change its nonaligned status. Several days after, Ukraine's Defense Minister Valeriy Shmarov, while summing up the results of the Ukrainian-U.S. exercises at the Yavorov training ground, said that the peacekeeping exercises did not mean at all that our state will change its nonaligned status. Therefore, my first question is: How can you explain the difference between the above statements? And the second question toward that end is: In a week's time you intend to pay an official visit to NATO headquarters in Brussels — what will be discussed there? What have you prepared for that meeting? Thank you.

[Kuchma] Thank you. First and foremost, I am going there at the invitation of the European Union. So, I would ask you not to confuse things, as they say. If there is enough time — and I will take advantage of this — I will definitely visit NATO headquarters.

As regards the differences between the president and the defense minister, I do not see any differences because I have never said that Ukraine was going to change its status overnight. You understand that, first, this issue is within the competence of the Supreme Council and, second, I am well aware of this and you, too, are probably well aware of the fact that even the countries that have already submitted their applications [for NATO membership] still do not have the date of their admission set. It will take time, maybe more than one year.

True, I did say that [changes thought], as a matter of fact, I reiterated something I have been saying all the time and everywhere: That no country has the right of veto, that NATO's doors should be open to any country, Ukraine included, and that we really try to expand cooperation, including with NATO. The peacekeeping exercises in Lvov Region were held for the sake of this, so that we could understand each other better.

[Moderator] Third microphone, please.

[Levytska] URP-Inform and ZA VILNU UKRAYINU newspaper, Lviv, Levytska. Esteemed Mr. President, in Minsk a number of CIS states signed agreements on the joint protection of borders and on a common customs union. Does this mean that on 26 May the CIS split into two parts: the countries that became fully dependent on Russia and the countries that will cooperate on a bilateral basis? And the second question is this: You visited the Baltic countries and met Ukrainian communities. Were they asking for any protection, like the Russian-speaking population was doing, according to repeated statements by the Russian leadership. Thanks.

[Kuchma] I believe you are politicians and political scientists, too, so draw your own conclusions on whether the CIS split into two halves. However, I think, the fact that Ukraine, for example, did not join the customs union or the agreement on the protection of borders is our own business, first and foremost, because this is our policy. We understand that if there are external borders and no internal borders, there will be no Ukrainian state, there will be one state only. The same refers to the customs union because this is as lengthy a task as joining NATO, as they say, because it is necessary to update legislation and so on — you are probably well aware of this.

As regards [changes thought], I had an official, so to speak, meeting with the Ukrainian community in Latvia and they met me unofficially in Tallinn on a square in front of the municipal council. And everywhere there was a warm welcome and open conversations. True, there are problems today, including those facing our diaspora. The main problem, as you know, is that of citizenship. I believe that we must show understanding of the situation that has taken shape in the Baltic countries. If there are fewer Latvians in Latvia, for example, than people of other nationalities, this is a big problem. We must understand their measures toward that end. But when taking these measures it is necessary to ensure that the non-indigenous population, or national minorities, as they say, do not feel like guests, as a matter of fact. It is necessary to move in the direction of adopting positive decisions toward that end. And there were such conversations both with the president of Latvia and with the president of Estonia. I do not want to mention the steps which have already been made, but they have been made and they give me grounds to say this.

By the way, in Tallinn we were met by people who were carrying posters saying that our main task, after all, is to preserve the Ukrainian state. And I have never heard even a single word on their part — although there were many people in the square — that pressure was exerted on them, that they were not allowed to work and live normally, although, these problems do exist, as you understand. And the leaders of those states acknowledge this. So, the task now is to solve these problems at government level.

[Zarya, in Russian] Sergey Zarya, Interethnic Information Bureau. Mr. President, excuse me for speaking in Russian, in Minsk you said that the question of borders is a question of sovereignty. Then why did Mr. Horbulin agree to sign a joint air defense treaty with Russia? Our military objected but Mr. Horbulin went ahead and signed it.

[Kuchma, in Ukrainian] I don't know whose gossip you are repeating because Horbulin did not sign any treaties and had nothing to do with them. So ask your source about it. We did not sign anything like that in Minsk, and Horbulin was not there, and he was not in Almaty, either.

[Zarya, in Russian] All right, the second question. The contacts with the Ukrainian diaspora do not seem to be organized. There used to be congresses of Ukrainians. Why are they not being held any more?

[Kuchma, in Ukrainian] Which newspaper are you from?

[Zarya, in Russian] Interethnic Information Bureau.

[Kuchma, in Ukrainian] Who is preventing anyone from holding congresses? Or maybe I do not understand your question? Could you put it clearly?

[Zarya, in Russian] There were two congresses under Kravchuk.

[Kuchma, in Ukrainian] Right. Well, why don't we ask Leonid Makarovych to hold two more? I have nothing against it.

[Klymenko] Borys Klymenko, Spanish news agency EFE. Mr. President, in Minsk you said, if I am correct, that President Yeltsin may not have been adequately informed of the facts you could provide. Are you going to invite Mr. Baltin, the Black Sea Fleet commander, to see you prior to your trip to Sochi, so that you would hear first-hand information on what is going on in the Black Sea Fleet? Second, how would you comment on the situation in Bosnia regarding the five Ukrainian servicemen?

[Kuchma] First of all, I don't think Baltin would tell me anything new because I know Baltin's opinion. Especially because de jure the fleet is Russian-Ukrainian, or Ukrainian-Russian, but de facto it is the other way. I had a talk with Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin today, and we agreed to hold such meetings not between our military but between our advisers to look at the map and see who is who and what is what. We will work this way because we are too pressed for time if this meeting is to take place on 9 June. I want to confirm that Boris Nikolayevich and I agreed that we should make this decision together.

As for the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as you know, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense are making every effort to ensure that our people, who have been — I don't know how to put it correctly — taken prisoner or detained somewhere, remain alive. Thank God they are alive indeed, so far. And today I am going to sign a letter to the UN secretary general regarding this matter. We are doing everything possible and impossible to get this issue resolved by political means. I do not support the bombing. Apart from aggravating the situation, it did not do us any good.

[Yanevskyy] Danylo Yanevskyy, FILOSOFSKA SOTSIOLOHICHNA DUMKA. Esteemed Mr. President, during your visit to the Holy See, did you discuss the timing of the visit to Ukraine of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and the problem of restoring the right of Ukrainian Catholics, and what are your thoughts on the future relations between Kiev and the Vatican?

[Kuchma] I did not understand the first half of the question [words indistinct]. Yes, we discussed the issue of his visit. I told him honestly and openly that I was not a good diplomat and that it was not a good time for him to come to Ukraine. You are aware of the reasons for this. The arrival of such a person should be only for peace and not the opposite. His visit is connected with the date which the Catholic Church will be celebrating. I told him it was not expedient. But we would be happy to invite him some other time which is convenient for him.

You are also probably aware of the situation that exists in Ukraine today as regards interconfessional relations. In my opinion they are a lot better today than, say, a year ago. We should preserve this with all our efforts and means.

[Skachko] Volodymyr Skachko from Pislyamova [Epilogue] program. The power law has been adopted but Leonid Danylovych, when are you going to form the government and, generally speaking, are you going to do so? The second question, the law on implementation of the law on power has not been adopted. What do you intend to do in this regard, after all it is known that the communists number over 100 and they will always block this important decision? Thank you.

[Kuchma] You have replied to the first question about the formation of the government by your second question. I do not want to violate the constitution by appointing the government. Unfortunately, the dragging out of this issue does not benefit the socioeconomic situation in Ukraine.

I am grateful to those deputies who voted for the law as an ordinary one, and I am waiting for Mr. Moroz to submit it to me for endorsement, because the five days have already passed, and today 10 days have passed. It must be published, from all points of view. First because there are some aspects in it which are not constitutional and therefore must be implemented now. Second, the people must see for themselves, as they read it, why there is so much fuss about it in the left-wing and the extreme right-wing sections of the parliament. Because there is not a single reason to fuss.

And, third, I would like to see common sense prevail in parliament and I hope to see a resolution passed by a constitutional majority to put the law into effect. The parliament will resume its work tomorrow. If the resolution is not passed, it must be understood that the president cannot wait any longer. I have been waiting since 2 December 1994. I compromised all the time. And this law, already passed by the Supreme Council itself, was amended by the conciliatory commission, and I compromised virtually on every issue. I support the deputies' proposals on the constitutional agreement. We will see tomorrow about that. But today I am telling you very frankly that if the parliament fails to take a decision, the president will.

[Levytskyy] Myroslav Levytskyy, the NASHE SLOVO newspaper. Esteemed Mr. President, I will return to the previous question if I may. Is there any precedent for solving such problems as delimitation of powers between the power structures by means of an agreement between the head of the executive branch and a section of parliament?

[Kuchma] If there is not, there will be.

[Levytskyy] My second question: Is there anything in the economic and political experience of the Baltic countries you visited that you would like to use while reforming Ukraine's economy? Thank you.

[Kuchma] The main thing I like was the fact that those countries made the decision to become genuinely independent sovereign countries and they have no intention of either going back or making a turn. This is what I like. Once the nation makes this decision, no difficulties will make it go back, although not all is going as well there, it seems to us, as they would have liked it to be. But they will not get off this road. Because they are a nation. They are a people.

[Naumenko] Ukrainian radio, Vitaliy Naumenko. Leonid Danylovych, I have two questions, both about the left wing ...

[Kuchma, interrupting] By the way, they are grateful to Russia. In the winter of 1991, Tallinn was running out of fuel and there was only enough left for 36 days. They even prepared to evacuate people to villages. Their shock therapy took place in December 1991-January 1992. And they lived through that time, they survived world prices for gas, instead of sucking the last drops of blood from oneself and one's people as we do. You know their gas prices, residential and industrial. Residential consumers pay more than industrial ones. But the desire to belong to civilized nations forces them to produce competitive products. Because, if not pushed, we keep producing the same goods we always have [as heard]. Even in the former Soviet Union nobody wants our products, but there is pressure from everywhere to produce them. What for? All this talk about a single economic area in the former Soviet Union is deception, because today there is no state planning committee or anything like that to force either enterprises or collective farms to buy unwanted products. We must understand this and grow out of it.

[Naumenko] Vitaliy Naumenko, Ukrainian Radio. Leonid Danylovych, I have two questions both dedicated to the left-wing forces. The first is on the conclusions of your visit to the Baltics, namely that reforms were conducted in those countries owing to to a strong president. What are your comments on the decisions taken at the latest plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine where I quote, the council of ministers will be the highest executive authority — this is according to their draft constitution — which does not envisage the post of president. This information was circulated today by Interfax-Ukraine. That is the first question and the second one is as follows: A comparative concept of reforms put forward by the socialists and the president has been published in the newspaper HOLOS UKRAYINY. Is it possible to recognize your program in the information published in the newspaper? Thank you.

[Kuchma] I cannot hear from this microphone. What did you say was the highest executive authority [words indistinct — crosstalk] headed by the plenum of the Ukrainian Communist Party's central committee — then I agree with this. I think this is their opinion. It is absurd.

[Naumenko] You probably did not understand. The question was, the plenum of the Ukrainian Communist Party's central committee has approved its own draft new Ukrainian constitution in accordance with which the council of ministers is the highest state authority in Ukraine and the draft does not envisage the post of president. Can you comment on this?

[Kuchma] Do I have to comment on this? Go and ask them what they mean. What more can I say if that is all they can come up with? Do you understand? [laughter in background]

[Naumenko] The second question is published in HOLOS UKRAYINY and concerns both your draft reforms and the Socialists' draft reforms. Can one recognize your draft from what has been published?

[Kuchma] I saw the newspaper. It is a deliberate distortion of the truth. I am due to meet comrade Moroz at 1700 and will tell him, because he belongs to that faction, that those people who are responsible for writing this article are unscrupulous. Could they really resort to this and then publish it on behalf of their faction in the Supreme Council newspaper? I ask myself, does the Supreme Council exist or not? Such things should only be published in the Socialist Party newspaper.

[Vaydemann] Yukhym Vaydemann, new correspondent of the German newspaper HANDELSBLATT and the Swiss newspaper NEUE ZUERCHE-ZEITUNG. Esteemed Mr. President, can you tell us in more detail how you intend to solve the problem of introducing the law on power? Will it be by decree or by some other means? The second question is the following: As regards Russia and Ukraine's relations with Russia, it seems that Russian politicians are playing an important role here do you think that there are provocations on the part of Russian politicians and if so how will you react to this?

[Kuchma] I have already spoken about the law on power and will repeat that the chairman of the Supreme Council should submit this law and the president should sign it. As regards the second part of the law, the constitution, and the abolition of some articles of the constitution, then that is another matter. I have said that I do not reject the constitutional agreement between the deputies' majority and the president. It should be adopted not by presidential decree but by a constitutional agreement between the parliament and the president.

With regard to the elections in Russia, I am convinced that Ukraine will play an excessively important role quote, for Ukraine, unquote, because many politicians are making a career out of this and we can already see this. They forget about everything including international law. Let us wait and see.

[Kolomayets] Marta Kolomayets, Ukrainian Weekly. Mr. President, what do you expect from the meeting with President Yeltsin in Sochi? Do you have any new proposals on the division of the fleet, and how far are you prepared to go in terms of concessions? Also, there is a rumor that you will be meeting behind closed doors, and journalists will not be allowed. Could you please clarify this?

[Kuchma] Probably not during the talks, but as far as the signing ceremony is concerned, all journalists will by all means be invited. Just pray that we reach agreement. How far can we go and what sort of step can we make there? Something without violating Ukrainian legislation and our national interests. But as I said several times before, I do understand very well that Russia has its strategic interests in the Black Sea. As the president, I have to reckon with that. We are prepared to sign an agreement ensuring normal conditions for the functioning of the Russian naval fleet. I repeat, normal conditions. Not at the expense of territorial concessions, but through a treaty in line with our legislation and international law. I think we will find such a solution.

I don't want to make any statements here. It will be our meeting to assess the Black Sea Fleet situation. At first, we will be meeting tete-a-tete. The issue has to be resolved, because at the moment, it is only being used by forces both in Ukraine and Russia who do not want normal relations between our states.

[Sokil] Oleksandr Sokil, PRAVDA UKRAINY. Leonid Danylovych, you said once that if the Supreme Council fails to cooperate you would call a plebiscite. Do you still have that intention at present or have you given up the idea? How would you phrase the questions of the ballot?

[Kuchma] No, I have not given up that idea. I also said that it would not be the best option. But even the power law which has been passed says that the president cannot call a referendum on any issue of his choosing, but only on those involving a constitutional change. That is why the only way a president can ask his people's opinion is by means of a plebiscite. The questions there would be very simple, without any legal loopholes: Do you have confidence in the president, yes or no?, and: Do you have confidence in the Supreme Council, yes or no? If the president loses the vote of confidence he must leave the political scene, and that is fair. We will have to call a new election, that is all. And before the election, the Supreme Council will assume full responsibility, with the same proviso as the one devised by the central committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine: The Cabinet of Ministers is the top executive office.

[Unidentified correspondent] Esteemed president, some of the media, especially in Russia, describe the relations between Ukraine and Russia as being close to a crisis. One hopes this is not true. How would you assess them after your meeting with President Yeltsin in Minsk and today's conversation?

[Kuchma] We had a very long and frank discussion in Minsk. I would say we had a very good discussion. The main thing is that both presidents are seeking a solution, and Boris Nikolayevich openly told me so. And that is a 90 percent success already. Today, as I said, we agreed that our aides and advisers will meet and discuss the issue in detail.

[Kulykov] REUTERS, Yuriy Kulykov. Esteemed Leonid Danylovych, I would like to return to the Bosnian issue. In your letter to the UN secretary general, will you say that Ukraine does not plan to withdraw its battalion from Bosnia? What is the role of peacekeeping in Ukrainian foreign policy? And the second question, when you meet NATO leaders in Brussels you will probably talk about closer ties between Ukraine and the organization, could you tell us more about that? Thank you.

[Kuchma] First of all, let me remind you that the U.S.- Ukrainian exercise in Lvov was a peacekeeping exercise. If you know that, I think that is your answer. It also bore direct relevance to Yugoslavia. I believe that the UN peacekeeping forces should under no circumstances be withdrawn from Yugoslavia at the present time. Because the state of affairs there will be ever more aggravated. But the main task is to make [the warring sides] sit at the negotiating table. I think, the countries-coordinators should get together and the Security Council should hold its sitting today. As far as I know, the president of France was insisting on this.

[Pohorelova] Iryna Pohorelova, POLITYKA. Leonid Danylovych, you said already that there is no government in Ukraine at present, instead there is the Supreme Council which dismissed the government and refuses to enact the power law. But part of your election program was a strong, vertical executive power structure. The Supreme Council has made a valid point. They say that neither the power law nor other existing legislation denies a strong executive authority or your power to form the government. Even the part about the prime minister was kept in the form you proposed. So when will Ukraine see the new government, and, I will allow myself to put it bluntly, when will we see the new prime minister?

[Kuchma] Had I known you want to see him, I would have brought him along. As I said in the beginning, I am still waiting to receive the power law from the Supreme Council for endorsement. If I get it today, I will sign it, and tomorrow you will find it in the press. And we will have the power structure in the regions. But under the present constitution, the prime minister is appointed by the Supreme Council, along with eight ministers. So there are discrepancies.

I suppose you know that I officially instructed Yevhen Marchuk to form the government. I think this is no secret to anyone. But even if I receive the law today, I don't want to put him in an awkward position. On the other hand, if I submit nominations to the Supreme Council, we will be waiting for two months to get them approved. That is for sure. Because each candidate is supposed to present his program, which should then be discussed, and then every ministerial candidate has to be discussed, first in commissions, then in the Supreme Council. That is the procedure. You saw that the power law was in parliament since December. The same will be true for the government. We must decide now which way to go.

[Rybalko] Rybalko, the Ukrainian section of Radio Liberty. Esteemed Mr. President, you were the initiator of the law on power and local self-government, but you were not the initiator of the law on implementation of this law. Are you sufficiently in control of the processes involved in preparing this law? For example, what is the aim of abolishing article 68 of the constitution which defines Ukraine as an independent and lawful state? The second question is about a decree signed on 22 May. It contains many deadlines that expire on 1 June. Can you say something about the results of these measures? Thank you.

[Kuchma] Yes indeed, I was the initiator of this law on power. As regards the constitutional agreement, this proposal came from people's deputy Serhiy Holovatyy who submitted it last year. I did not reject it because it was not mine. It originated from practically eight Supreme Council factions that proposed this way out of the constitutional crisis. This is not only a constitutional crisis but also a political one.

The decree is practically an instruction because one still needs to draw up some executive acts. One must not expect things to improve today or tomorrow, but the document envisages many ordinary government actions. Let us hope that they will be beneficial. I do not remember, I do not know what has been taken out of this law on power.

[Rybalko] Among the list of articles that are to be suspended during the activity of the law on power, there is, in particular, article 68 which defines Ukraine's status. Ukraine is an independent, lawful, and democratic state. I asked what was the aim of rescinding it. Was it your initiative or ...

[Kuchma, interrupting] I am hearing this from you for the first time.

[Pyvovarov] KYYIVSKA PRAVDA, Pyvovarov. Esteemed Leonid Danylovych, documents on the closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power station and the setting up of replacement facilities that are currently being signed with foreign states are very unclear on the fate of the sarcophagus. It is possible that after the closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power station and the setting up of replacement facilities we could be left either with an unbuilt sarcophagus or a half-completed cover? Should we not put the question more broadly than this, namely both transforming the construction of the second cover and transforming the fourth generating set into an ecologically clean zone? Thank you.

[Kuchma] We always had a comprehensive approach to the problem of Chernobyl, including the sarcophagus. There is no other way. The partners involved in this understand that the main danger is that no one knows what processes are going in the sarcophagus. Thus, these were the only proposals we put to our partners. It is a completely different matter that the construction of capacities is currently under consideration. I wish to stress once again that the Chernobyl issue was and will continue to be dealt with in a comprehensive manner.

I would like to thank you all, and goodbye.

Parliament Questions Prosecutor's Statement

WS2905120095 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 2159 GMT 27 May 95

[Report by Oksana Hasiuk]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Deputies started their last parliamentary week by consideration of the general prosecutor's office report. The national legislature, riled after having been informed in writing for two months by General Prosecutor Vladislav Datsyuk that he was unable to testify before it due to a bad cold, decided to hold a session to question him concerning a report on major criminal investigations that he had submitted to deputies in February.

Speaker Oleksandr Moroz announced to parliament May 19, when the questioning was to have begun, that Datsyuk "is on vacation and nobody knows where he is now" and persuaded deputies to hold the discussion in his absence.

Datsyuk, who was called to participate in the May 23 parliamentary session, told deputies he was in Truskavets resort (western Ukraine). "I did not inform deputies where I was because of my personal safety," Datsyuk said.

After a heated debate on whether to let Datsyuk speak in parliament or not, Moroz made a pivotal decision. He let Datsyuk take the floor and give his speech without parliament's approval. The leftist majority in parliament supported a draft resolution on resignation of the general prosecutor and a non-confidence vote on the entire General Prosecutor's Office board. The draft was worked out by the parliamentary committee on keeping right and order.

Moroz said that he does not want the Ukrainian press to write that parliament wants to prosecute the general prosecutor. According to Datsyuk, the investigation of the Viktor Bozhenar case will be finished in June. Bozhenar, adviser to Moroz, was accused of embezzlement and arrested in March.

"But we did not accuse Moroz," said Datsyuk, but added that Moroz personally asked him do not arrest Bozhenar. "When we knew that Bozhenar was going to leave Ukraine, we arrested him," said Datsyuk.

Datsyuk also said investigation of Deputy Speaker Oleksandr Tkachenko's case will be finished soon. Tkachenko was accused of stealing US$70 million allocated to the Land and People agricultural association he founded. According to Datsyuk, Deputy General Prosecutor of Ukraine Olha Kolinko appealed to deputies to defend her from the pressure that was put on her by parliament's leadership during an investigation of all cases of corruption in high places.

"Kolinko did not appeal to parliament, she appealed to the press," said Moroz. Leading Ukrainian newspapers have printed interviews with Kolinko in which she accused parliament's leadership of putting pressure on the General Prosecutor's Office investigation of corruption cases involving top officials.

Making his speech in parliament, Datsyuk said 19 trillion karbovantsi [K] out of K73 trillion allocated for agricultural needs has been converted into hard currency. "You can ask Agricultural Minister Yuriy Karasyk, who is a parliamentary deputy, about this," Datsyuk told deputies. According to Datsyuk, Viktor Yushchenko, National Bank of Ukraine Governor, has been called to the General Prosecutor's Office for interrogation many times concerning this case.

Parliament passed a resolution May 23 in which it deemed the work of the general prosecutor and the entire General Prosecutor's Office board as non-satisfactory. In the resolution, deputies also ordered to the parliamentary committee on keeping right and order, together with representatives of all parliamentary groups and factions, to study the work of the General Prosecutor's Office and to inform parliament about this by June 1.

Parliament did not fire Datsyuk May 23; however, nobody knows what may happen June 1. According to the current Ukrainian Constitution, parliament has the right to appoint the general prosecutor, and he is subordinated to parliament. But, according to the Power Bill, when it is put into effect, the president would have the right to submit to parliament a nominee for general prosecutor of Ukraine.

It may happen that the Power Bill will be put into effect before consideration in parliament of the report about the situation in the General Prosecutor's Office gets under way.

Parliament approved May 18 a revised version of President Leonid Kuchma's Power Bill, deciding at the same time that an additional vote would be necessary before the law could be put into effect. According to the Conciliatory Committee charged with ironing out the bill, articles of the Kuchma law which would eliminate local government councils contradict the Constitution currently in effect. In order to put the bill into effect the Conciliatory Committee worked out a law on implementation of Power Bill.

All attempts to pass this Power Bill implementation law, which would have eliminated more than 56 constitutional articles with which the Power Bill is in conflict, failed during both the May 23 and May 24 sessions of parliament.

At last a group of parliamentary deputies, members of socialist and agricultural parliamentary factions and the Independents group in parliament, submitted to deputies May 25 a new law called the law on temporary suspension of some constitutional articles, changes to the Constitution and putting the Power Bill into effect.

The law, worked out by the Conciliatory Committee, would eliminate enforcement of constitutional articles that are in conflict with the Power Bill until approval of a new Ukrainian constitution. On the other hand, the law worked out by the group of deputies would suspend enforcement of constitutional articles that are in conflict with the Power Bill until a definite date — January 1, 1996.

What does it mean? According to Moroz, fixing a definite date for suspension of constitutional articles that are in conflict with the bill "will stimulate creation of a new Ukrainian constitution." So, socialists in parliament want to curtail the term of action of the Power Bill.

There is a little difference in titles of the two laws. The law, submitted to parliament by the Conciliatory Committee, is called the law on putting into effect the Power Bill and changes to the Constitution, connected with its approval. On the contrary, the law, submitted to parliamentarians by the group of deputies, is called the law on temporary suspension of some constitutional provisions and changes to the Constitution and putting the Power Bill into effect.

The Conciliatory Committee aims to put the Power Bill into effect and then to make the Ukrainian Constitution agree with it. The law submitted to parliament by the deputies group, according to Ivan Chyzh, Socialist parliamentary faction leader, is aimed at bringing the Power Bill into agreement with the current Ukrainian Constitution.

The law submitted to parliament by deputies proposes to suspend enforcement of the same articles that the Conciliatory Committee has proposed to eliminate, with the exception of one article.

The right-centrists in parliament were not ready to accept a proposal by members of the socialist and agriculture parliamentary factions and the Independents group in parliament. Serhiy Sobolyev, Reforms parliamentary group leader, said the right-centrists in parliament should think over the new law carefully. "We are afraid to be cheated by Socialists," said Sobolyev.

Parliament decided May 25 to postpone the issue of implementing the bill until May 30.

Meanwhile, the head of the Finance and Banking Committee, Viktor Suslov, said in parliament Friday, "there is a necessity for parliamentary leadership and for the heads of parliament's committee dealing with economy to hold a meeting personally with the president and acting prime minister."

The president sent a letter to parliament last week asking deputies to pass a very important economic law next week. But, according to Suslov, parliament "under no conditions should approve laws that are not prepared carefully." Suslov said the president sometimes submits to parliament draft laws that do not agreed with the Cabinet of Ministers.

For example, Suslov said, a draft law on the monetary system of Ukraine submitted to parliament by the president was not considered in the National Bank of Ukraine and was not approved by the government. "The executive power is leading the policy aimed at hardening tax pressure on businessmen," said Suslov.

"There is not the necessary cooperation between the executive branch and economic committees of parliament," said Suslov. He also said that he has been trying for three months to meet with the president to inform him directly about the situation regarding preparation of economic drafts. "But I failed to meet with the president," Suslov told deputies. "I have an assumption that Kuchma's staff is informing him about the situation in the Ukrainian economy in a wrong way."

Suslov said he stressed that he insists parliament's leadership together with the heads of its economic committees must meet with the president. Moroz said Friday he would discuss with the president the possibility of such meetings as soon as Kuchma comes from his Baltic trip.

Among draft laws that Kuchma asked parliament to approve at first was a draft law on industrial conglomerates. Parliament vetoed the presidential conglomerates decree March 2 and ordered the parliamentary economics committee together with the Cabinet of Ministers to work out a law on industrial conglomerates.

The economics committee submitted to parliament a draft that agreed with the presidential team. But deputy

Oleksandr Yeliashkevych, a member of the Reforms parliamentary group, worked out his own draft, supported by the Finance and Banking Committee. According to Yeliashkevych, the draft worked out by the economics committee did not avoid all failures that were in the presidential decree vetoed by parliament in March. As a result, deputies decided to order the Economics and Finance and Banking committees to create a joint draft law on industrial conglomerates and to submit it to the parliament Presidium meeting scheduled for May 29.

Parliament also ratified on May 26 a convention between the Ukrainian and American Governments on avoiding double taxation, signed by Ukrainian and U.S. presidents in March 1994. Ratification of this convention, according to Viktor Ilyin, Ukraine's Deputy Finance Minister, the ratification of such a convention "meets the requirements of Ukraine's state program of foreign investment encouragement that calls for signing such conventions with the main trade partners of Ukraine." Ilyin said, "The United States is the main trade partner of Ukraine in the American region."

The next session of parliament is scheduled for May 30.

Communists Approve Draft National Constitution

LD2905153595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1144 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, May 29 (INTERFAX-UKRAINE) - The central committee of the Ukrainian communist party has approved its own draft of the country's new constitution and passed a resolution to offer it for parliamentary debate.

The draft provides for a cabinet of ministers as the supreme executive, but no presidency is envisaged, a party spokesman told INTERFAX.

It also envisages the reinstatement of Soviet rule and "a fraternal union of peoples" declaring the individual as the supreme social value regardless of ethnic affinity or social standing.

The Communists also approved a resolution to carry out a day of action together with other left-wing parties and movements in June in support of the workers and against the government's offensive on their "social" achievements. A series of protest demonstrations, rallies and pickets are envisaged.

The party will also send its own delegation with its to attend the 30th Congress of the Union of Communist Parties-the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Party leader Petr Simonenko is to head it.

Rukh Critical of Parliament's Crimea Decision

LD2705203895 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The resolution on the situation in Crimea, which the Supreme Council of Ukraine passed on 25 May, may have complicated the political and legal consequences for the Ukrainian state, a statement by the parliamentary faction of the People's Movement of Ukraine [Rukh] says. One of the items in the adopted document refers to the law on the delimitation of powers between Ukraine and the Republic of Crimea, which was abrogated by the Supreme Council on 17 March, the statement says. In the opinion of the faction, this actually means that the Supreme Council has radically changed its Crimean policy.

The faction proposes that the issue of cancelling the Crimean Supreme Council decisions that run counter to the Constitution and laws of Ukraine be considered without delay, in accordance with the parliamentary rules of procedure.

Kuchma Issues Decree on Drafting 1996 Budget

LD2905225095 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1845 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma has signed a decree "On measures to organize work on the drafting of the state budget of Ukraine for 1996."

According to the decree, the Ukrainian Economic Ministry together with the Ministry of Finance, the National Bank of Ukraine, and other ministries and departments have until 1 June 1995 to draw up the main projected macroeconomic indicators of Ukraine's economic and social development in 1996 as well as to make the following calculations: the size of GDP and national income; the draft consolidated balance of financial resources; the population's incomes and expenditures; the balance of payments and hard currency plan; indices of changes in wholesale and retail prices compared with 1995; the amount of income as a whole and in the context of administrative and territorial formations; indices of the labor payment fund; the scale of geological prospecting work and budgetary requirements.

The Ukrainian Ministry of Finances has been instructed to prepare, by 1 July 1995, Ukraine's draft consolidated budget and submit it by 15 August for the Cabinet of Ministers' consideration.

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine has until 1 September to submit the draft 1996 state budget for the Ukrainian president's consideration.

Accord on Chernobyl Non-Nuclear Conversion Signed

WS2905114895 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 2159 GMT 27 May 95

["Special to INTELNEWS" by Serhiy Sokolovskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, May 27 — Yet another chapter in the saga of the beleaguered Chernobyl nuclear power plant was written Saturday [27 May] as Ukraine signed an agreement with an international consortium for the conversion of the station into a non-nuclear power source.

Deputy Prime Minister Serhiy Osyka led the Ukrainian delegation to the negotiations to integrate Ukraine as partner into the consortium led by ABB, a worldwide electrical-engineering group that specializes in electric power generation, transmission and distribution.

The consortium said that its targets are: maintaining the Ukrainian energy balance by means of replacing Chernobyl's capacities with alternative power capacities; maintaining the social infrastructure of the Chernobyl zone and the city of Slavutych; maintaining the trained personnel and scientific potential of the Ukrainian nuclear energy industry; and carrying out international financing of the projects on the basis of justice and equivalency.

"It used to be in the history of mankind that a great trouble united peoples," Osyka said. "Chernobyl has become such trouble in our country. I want to stress that it was the first attempt of active cooperation between the Commonwealth of Independent States countries and the West."

ABB President and CEO Percy Barnevik said that his group considered the decision by the Ukrainian Government to close the Chernobyl nuclear power plant by the end of the century "historic." Barnevik said, "We will do our best to do so. Aid from the international financial community will help to find a socially acceptable solution to the problem." The very existence of Chernobyl puts the whole world's nuclear industry in a bad light, he said. There is growing world public opinion against the use of nuclear power, Barnevik said, and world opinion is directed toward safer power choices. Because of that sentiment, Barnevik said, assistance in helping Ukraine and the consortium achieve their goal "will be comprehensive."

ABB said that converting Chernobyl into a gas-fired power plant would be the best solution for several reasons: gas would be the most efficient fuel source, a gas plant would preserve the environment with the lowest emissions of any option, and the proposed combined-cycle power plant could be constructed and operational within three years.

In respect to experience in such power station conversions, ABB said that it has already converted two pressurized-water nuclear plants in the United States into fossil-fuel power plants.

The conversion consortium will incorporate Ukrainian companies and state bodies as well as foreign ones. Included in the Ukrainian contingent are the following: State Nuclear Energy Committee, Environment Protection Ministry, Foreign Economic Relations Ministry, Chernobyl plant representatives, Turboatom, Monolit, DniproEnerhoBudProm, NVO Rotor, AO Budmashyna, Kiev Institute Enerhoproekt and Kharkov Institute Enerhoproekt.

Information provided by ABB said that in addition to the flagship firm, other major international consortium members include CMS (United States), Kawasaki (Japan), Skanska (Sweden), Mannesmann Anlagenbau (Germany) and Danish Power (Denmark). The ABB-led group also said they do not exclude the possibility that some other companies will join the consortium.

ABB said that a large part of the manufacturing and engineering necessary for the conversion will be done in Ukraine so that the effort can maximize local resources. ABB presently has offices in Kiev, Odessa and Zaporizhia, and operates several manufacturing joint ventures in Ukraine. The company said that expects its work force in Ukraine to reach 2,000 this year.

Presidential assistant on security issues, Ukrainian Security Council secretary Volodymyr Horbulin congratulated the consortium participants on behalf of President Leonid Kuchma. Horbulin said the whole complex of Chernobyl-related problems can be solved only by mutual efforts. State Nuclear Energy Committee Chairman Mykhailo Umanets said that the Chernobyl problem is not limited by the year of 2000 and will last at least until 2025.

Barnevik said that the introduction of the ABB complex system will not require much time: the first installation will generate electricity in 24 months and a new power plant will reach its projected capacity one year later. However, he said, all the safety issues surrounding Chernobyl require much time.

Estimates for the shutdown of Chernobyl range from US$1.4 billion to US$1.7 billion. The cost of new power plant construction is US$2.3 billion, and the whole Chernobyl program will cost US$10 billion. The consortium must solicit funding jointly with Ukraine.

The consortium members said they will not provide obstacles to other Chernobyl-related projects. Osyka said, "We will just coordinate and tie them in."

Economic Issues

EBRD To Give More Credits for Economic Projects

LD2605145895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1348 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, May 26 (INTERFAX-UKRAINE) — The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD] will increase crediting for important economic projects in Ukraine, EBRD President Jacques de Larosiere said at the international conference in London entitled The Investment Window into Ukraine.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry's press center told INTERFAX-UKRAINE that the EBRD president said Ukraine's progress in reforming the economy was "impressive." The EBRD president emphasized the achievements of the Ukrainian government in reaching macroeconomic stability, implementing structural reforms of the economy, pursuing tough monetarist policy and seriously bringing down inflation.

The EBRD president urged potential investors to use the opportunity and invest in the Ukrainian economy, according to the same source.

The Investment Window into Ukraine conference took place in London on May 24-25 and involved a Ukrainian delegation led by acting Prime Minister Yevgeniy Marchuk as well as about 400 organizations and potential-investment firms.

The Ukrainian delegation met with representatives of British departments and bank chairmen.

'Reunification' of Power Supply System Finished

WS3005092395 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0700 GMT 30 May 95

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Technical work on reunifying Ukrainian and Russian power supply systems was completed in May. The two countries' power supply systems were reunified on seven power grids, through which about 6 million kilowatt-hours of electrical energy are delivered to Ukraine daily.

However, the two Energy Ministries still need to resolve a few technical and financial issues arising as a result of the reunification.

Air Transportation Agreement Signed With Hungary

WS2905123895 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 1100 GMT 29 GMT 95

[From the "Ukrainian Business News" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On May 19th, during the official visit to Ukraine by Hungary's prime minister, an agreement "On Air Transportation" between Ukraine and Hungary was signed.

The document replaces the December 2, 1968 agreement between the defunct Soviet Union and Hungary, which, before the signing of the new agreement, provided the legal basis for Ukrainian-Hungarian cooperation on air transportation.

The agreement will take effect from the date when the two sides notify each other about completion of all procedures necessary for its implementation. After that, the agreement will be registered with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

According to the provisions of the agreement, each of the two countries will appoint one airline to organize flights linking their various cities. The appointed airlines are Air Ukraine (on the Ukrainian side) and Malev (on the Hungarian side).

On the part of Ukraine, flights organized under the agreement will take off at the Borispol International Airport and one other airport to be named at a later date, while on the Hungarian side, flights will take off at an airport to be named later.

At the present time, Air Ukraine operates a TU-134 aircraft along the Kiev-Budapest-Kiev route two times a week, while Malev operates a Boeing-737 along the Budapest-Kiev-Budapest route four times a week.

Malev's officials are asking Ukraine to increase the number of its flights to four per week. However, Ukrainian Transportation Ministry's Civil Aviation Department consistently turns down the offer, claiming that the Borispol International Airport is not capable of handling extra flights.

Old Oil, Gas Fields To Go Into Production

WS2905112395 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 1906 GMT 28 May 95

[Report by Andrea Faiad]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Oil and natural gas fields in Poltava Oblast originally drilled and abandoned 30 years ago will soon go into production. The project, funded by a US$8 million loan from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD], aims to lower Ukraine's petroleum imports.

Hundreds of wells were drilled in the Poltava fields in the 1960's but they were small and considered of little value by the former Soviet Union. Instead, attention was turned to the vast Siberian oil fields.

Today, however, the fields will help raise Ukraine's energy production capacity. Ukraine imports about 90 percent of its energy needs, according to Pierre Kahn, an EBRD project analyst.

"There's not only the financial concern but also the economic return for Ukraine," he said. "The bank does not want to finance a project that won't help Ukraine as a country."

The loan agreement was signed in April between the Ukrainian joint venture production company Poltava Petroleum, Co. and the EBRD. The State Property Fund and Poltava GazProm own 51 percent and the British independent oil and gas company JKX Exploration and Production, Ltd. owns 49 percent of the petroleum company. It will run the Ignatovskoye oil and gas field in the Novo-Nikolaevskoye complex south of the city of Poltava. It is the first operational oil and gas joint venture in Ukraine. The EBRD financing is expected to spur development of similar projects elsewhere in Ukraine. (JKX already has operations in Ukraine, Georgia and Russia. In these areas, JKX also is involved in transportation, processing and sale of hydrocarbons and derivative products.)

Although there are several deposits awaiting development, such as in Yablunovsk and Kulichikha, Novo-Nikolaevskoye was chosen because it has a 30 million-ton capacity for oil, said Anatoliy Moroz, chief engineer at PoltavaGazProm. Since the loan is only enough to fund one project, the other deposits will remain undeveloped, he added.

"The loan is a big sum of money but it won't make Ukraine's oil processing industry stand on its own feet," Moroz said. "The money is only enough for one of several projects."

The loan represents the EBRD's first investment in the Ukrainian energy sector.

"By assisting the country to develop its indigenous resources, the EBRD can do two things: show that it is possible to create joint ventures in this sector and reduce Ukraine's imports of oil and gas, thereby using its hard currency earnings in other areas of its economy," said EBRD First Vice President Ron Freeman. To date, the EBRD invested ECU 161.7 million in Ukraine in six projects, with a total project cost of ECU 303 million.

Proceeds from the loan will be used to finance drilling four new wells to increase the production capacity, connect the wells to the operation and production base and construct a pipeline and rail export facility. Ukrainians and foreigners will be hired to run the project.

Daily production from the field is expected to reach 4,000 barrels of oil and 45 million cubic feet of natural gas in the first phase, according to the EBRD. Overall, revenues from the project are estimated at 66 million cubic feet of natural gas per year and 44.4 million barrels of oil a year, Kahn said. Of the products, he said, 49 percent of the yields will be sold on the Ukrainian market first; extras will be exported.

In addition to the high yields and financial savings, the project will be ecologically sound. The EBRD requires the project meet western European environmental standards, Kahn said.

"PPC is extremely pleased to be working in the Poltava region and to be producing oil and gas there," said PPC General Manager Dave Davies. "We believe that this EBRD loan is extremely important for the joint venture and we hope it will encourage further investment in Ukraine."

Belarus

Prime Minister Arrives in Romania for Talks

LD2905223995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1452 GMT 29 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Morozov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bucharest, 29 May — Romania is an old and reliable economic partner of the Republic of Belarus, said Belarusian Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir, who arrived in the Romanian capital on a three-day official visit today. At Otopen Airport he was met by Romania's head of government Nicolae Vacaroiu.

Stressing that the main purpose of the visit is to broaden bilateral ties, Chyhir told journalists that Belarus is interested in importing from Romania certain types of agrarian produce, such as wheat and maize seeds.

The program for the visit includes talks with the Romanian prime minister and foreign minister and a meeting between the head of the Belarusian cabinet and President Ion Iliescu.

Due for signing are an intergovernmental agreement on the mutual development and protection of investments, on cooperation in the sphere of international road transport, as well as a procedure for setting up a joint Romanian-Belarusian commission on cooperation. The possibility of holding an exhibition of Romanian furniture and consumer goods in Minsk will be discussed during the meetings between representatives of the two countries' business circles.

Chyhir Talks with Vacaroiu, Melascanu

LD3005083895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0807 GMT 30 May 95

[By Nikolai Morozov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bucharest May 30 (ITAR-TASS) — Although the level of Romanian-Belarusian exchanges has been continuously rising in recent years, it is still far from corresponding to the cooperation resources of the two countries, Romanian Prime Minister Nicolae Vacaroiu has emphasised during talks with with Premier Mikhail Chhhir of the Republic of Belarus, who arrived here on Monday for an official visit.

For his part, the Belarusian premier called for finalising as soon as possible the elaboration of legal fundamentals for bilateral economic relations, particularly as regards the prevention of double taxation and the establishment of free trade areas and an air service.

Chyhir is of the opinion that the process of the economic integration in Belarus into the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) supplements Romania's European integration, which opens up wide prospects for cooperation between the two countries.

To Romania, the development of Romanian-Belarusian contacts signifies drawing closer to the huge market of the CIS, Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu has pointed out during a meeting with the Belarusian premier. The customs border between Belarus and Russia was eliminated recently. This may become an auspicious factor for Romanian firms which would like to operate on the vast eastern market, the Romanian diplomat believes.

From Chyhir's point of view, Romania is a "window on Europe" for Belarus while the latter is a wide gate for Romania to the eastern world, to the Russian Federation. Besides, Minsk hopes that cooperation with Bucharest will make it possible to ensure the operation of Belarusian defence-sector enterprises which have remained without defence orders.

Lukashenka Receives Cuban Foreign Minister Robaina

LD2705163795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1627 GMT 27 May 95

[By Aleksandr Lyushkevich]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, May 27 (ITAR-TASS) — Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka met Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina Gonzalez who arrived in Minsk on Friday [26 May] for a working visit.

"Although I had a very busy week, I looked forward to meeting with you with great interest and great hope," Lukashenka told the Cuban guest.

The Belarusian people show enormous interest and enthusiasm in learning what is going on in Cuba, the more so that the determination and unshakeableness of the Cuban people, their trust in future deserve greatest respect, Lukashenka said.

On Saturday, the Cuban foreign minister also had talks with Belarusian Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir and Foreign Minister Uladzimir Syanko.

On Sunday, Robaina Gonzales plans to visit a local voting station to witness a procedure of by-elections to a new Belarusian legislature.

Visit Said Aimed at Widening Trade

LD2705190195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1755 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, May 27 (INTERFAX-West) — Cuba is ready to barter cane sugar and pharmaceuticals and medical know-how for Belarusian-built cane-processing and sugar-refining equipment, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina Gonzalez told INTERFAX on Saturday [27 May].

He said his country was also in need of spare parts for tractors, fridges and TV-sets exported by Belarus to Cuba when the Soviet Union was still alive.

Robaina called for the restoration of links in the electronics industry the two countries had in the past.

He said his visit was aimed at widening bilateral trade and economic relations between Cuba and Belarus.

The minister met Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka and Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir during a two-day visit to Minsk ending on Saturday.

Lukashenka displayed interest in a widening of relations with that country.

Cuban Minister Discusses Cooperation

WS2905085295 Minsk BELAPAN in English
0800 GMT 28 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On 27 May, Robaina Gonzales Roberto, minister for foreign affairs of the Republic of Cuba, met Alyaksandr Lukashenka, president of the Republic of Belarus, Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir, and Mikhail Marynich, minister for foreign economic relations. The day before he held talks with Belarusian Minister of Agriculture Vasil Lyavonaw. "The distinguishing feature of the present visit of the head of the Cuban foreign office lies in the fact that it is the first visit of Cuba's minister for foreign affairs to the Republic of Belarus," Belarusian Foreign Minister Uladzimir Syanko declared after the talks. In his opinion, contacts between the two countries are useful and necessary. And the further extension of trade and economic relations should be carried out exclusively on a mutually beneficial basis.

During a brief interview Mr. Robaina pointed out that both sides were interested in the development of links under the new economic conditions. And the very tense schedule of the visit is evidence of this. The Cuban minister stressed that his country was in need of material resources for its sugar industry, as well as of agricultural machinery which Belarus can provide Cuba with. In its turn, Cuba is ready to provide Belarus with sugar. According to Mr. Robaina, the establishment of contacts in the field of medicine and the development of tourism is also possible. In his opinion, it is essential to resume ties in electronic industry.

The sides agreed to establish a joint commission at government level to work on the restoration of links between the two countries. The Cuban side submitted its proposals on the composition of such a commission. During the talks at foreign minister level, relations between Belarus and Cuba in the United Nations Organization and on the world arena were discussed. In reply to a BELAPAN correspondent's question as to whether contacts between the two countries at the highest level will take place, the Cuban foreign minister said that everything would depend on how effectively the government commissions will work. "The better results we have, the more favorable conditions we create for the organization of a summit," Mr. Robaina said. According to him, the leaders of the two countries have enough desire for a summit.

Chernomyrdin, Lukashenka Remove Customs Barriers

LD2705161595 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1310 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, May 27 (INTERFAX-West) — "We have destroyed today what should not have been created," Russia's Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin declared after removing the customs barrier on the Russian-Belarussian border on Friday night [26 May].

On May 26, the Presidents of Russia and Belarus, Boris Yeltsin and Alyaksandr Lukashenka, signed documents to abolish the customs service. In the evening of the same day, Chernomyrdin and Lukashenka took part in a ceremony for removing the customs barrier near the Redka and Krasnaya Gorka villages on the border between the Smolensk and the Vitebsk regions.

In Chernomyrdin's opinion, a similar "breakthrough must inevitably take lace on Russia's border with other Commonwealth republics."

Lukashenka, for his part, noted that with the removal of the customs barrier "we have completed the first stage of setting up a Belarussian-Russian Customs Union, the key task of which has been to do away with customs control." In Lukashenka's opinion, it was "an artificial barrier, dividing our republics." "Now the door is open. Those who will hinder traffic, will be isolated," Lukashenka stressed.

U.S. Group To Examine Russian Missile Base

LD2605153495 Minsk Radio Minsk Network
in Belarusian 1300 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In accordance with the Treaty on Reduction and Restriction of Strategic Offensive Weapons, the U.S. Government has informed the Republic of Belarus of their intention to carry out an inspection in accordance with Sub-Clause 2 of Clause 11.

The purpose of the inspection is to check the initial information that was given by Belarus in the memorandum of the agreement on implementation of the treaty. The inspection group from the U.S. will spend four days in our country. During the meeting [as heard] it will inspect one of the missile bases that is under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation. Employees of the National Agency of the Republic of Belarus for Control and Inspection will be escorting the foreign group.

Second Round of Supreme Soviet Elections Held

Lukashenka Casts Vote

LD2805181495 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1700 GMT 28 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The second round of elections to the Supreme Soviet is being held in Belarus today. Our correspondent Yuriy Svirko reports by telephone from Minsk.

[Svirko] We will know if the elections are valid or not after 2300 Moscow time when voting ends. Many observers are predicting that the necessary number of deputies will not be elected. Belarusians elected only 18 deputies at the first round, which took place on 14 May. The voter turn-out back then was 65 percent, with only 52 percent in Minsk. A national referendum was held along with the elections two weeks ago and there was a massive campaign to get people to vote.

There are 260 seats in the Belarusian Supreme Soviet. Elections are being held in 216 districts on Sunday. The two candidates left from the first round are standing in each. Today, in contrast to the first round, Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka did not cross out all the candidates on his ballot paper. He voted for Petr Shkut, the head of the Department of Internal Affairs of Minsk's Frunze District, the largest in the country. The president crossed out Genadz Karpenka, an influential deputy in the old parliament who is leader of the People's Accord Party and was once a presidential candidate.

After voting, Lukashenka said the following — and I quote: I think that a parliament will be elected. It is journalists who are putting about the idea that the president is against having a parliament. That is absurd, of course. The state cannot exist without a parliament. How can the courts work if there are no laws? What? We have already been through the time when people were thrown in jail and executed by firing squad by decree. There must be a parliament, the Belarusian president said.

Yuriy Svirko, Minsk, Radio Russia news service.

Half of Electorate Ignores Voting

LD2805184495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1818 GMT 28 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, May 28 (ITAR-TASS) — Less than half of the electorate had voted in the run-off parliamentary elections in Belarus by 19:00 local time on Sunday, according to the Central Electoral Commission.

The Commission said only 46.3 per cent of those eligible to vote attended the polls.

The turnout was the heaviest in the Gomel region — 51.1 per cent. The 50-percent threshold was also passed in the Vitebsk, Grodno and Minsk regions.

The electorate was most passive in the Belarusian capital Minsk where only one in four went to the polling stations.

However, the voting was livelier in the constituencies where the candidates were Zenon Pozdnyak, leader of the Belarusian People's Front, former parliament speaker Stanislav Shushkevich and Stanislav Bogdankevich, board chairman of the National Bank of Belarus.

Some analysts predicted a failure of the elections from the very outset, saying that with such a turnout it was unlikely that even two thirds of the deputies would be elected.

For a new parliament to be formed, it is necessary to elect 174 deputies, or two thirds of the future legislature.

The situation is being compounded by the passivity of the voters and the fact that 29 constituencies failed to elect deputies in the first round and have to nominate new candidates.

Central Electoral Commission officials told the Belinform news agency that by 14:00 the turnout today was 10-12 percent lower than that in the first round.

Electorate Fails To Elect Legislature

LD2905061395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0536 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, May 29 (ITAR-TASS) — The results of the second round of the general elections to the Belarusian parliament, held last Sunday, showed that the Belarusian legislature will not be able to start its deliberations in the near future.

The Belinform news agency learnt at the Central Electoral Commission that, although, according to preliminary information, slightly over 50 percent of voters went to the polls, they could not elect the necessary 174 lawmakers, that is two-thirds from the full composition.

It is indicative that the city of Minsk with its 42 constituencies has not elected a single parliamentarian during the two rounds.

This is despite the fact that such prominent people as leader of the Belarusian People's Front Zenon Pozdnyak, ex-speaker of the Belarusian parliament Stanislav Shushkevich and chairman of the National Bank board Stanislaw Bahdankevich ran for parliament here.

The old legislature may perform powers under the present circumstances till new parliament is elected.

Number of Foreign Observers Specified

WS2905085095 Minsk BELAPAN in English
0800 GMT 28 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] According to data received from the Central Commission for Elections and National Referendums, 218 foreign observers were accredited in Belarus to monitor the second round of parliamentary elections. This is 18 people more than in the first round. Among the observers, there are 23 representatives of the U.S. Embassy, 16 of the Polish Embassy, 17 representatives of Russia, 12 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, six of the European Parliament, three of the Parliamentary Assembly of NATO, 15 of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, two representatives of the Ukrainian Committee for Human Rights, and three representatives of the Helsinki group. However, according to a worker of the Central Commission for Elections, only approximately half the observers are directly monitoring the course of the voting.

Agrarians, Communists Prevail in Parliament

LD2905155295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English
1329 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK May 29 (ITAR-TASS) — The situation which developed in Belarus after the second round of the general elections held last Sunday, can be described as parliament without Minsk representatives and the republic without a legislature.

According to preliminary results, 102 lawmakers were elected. Thus, taking into account eighteen legislators elected to parliament after the first round on May 14, the number of parliamentarians totals 120.

Under the Belarusian Constitution, the republic has a 260-seat legislature. Parliament can start work only if at least 174 lawmakers, or two-thirds of parliament's composition, are elected.

Thus, the country faces another, or maybe even more, rounds of parliamentary race. It will be more difficult to elect with every new round: people in citizens ignore the election campaign. This is clearly corroborated by the Belarusian capital Minsk where not a single parliamentarian was elected in 42 constituencies during the two rounds.

Those elected last Sunday include speaker of the present parliament Mechyslaw Hryb, ex-premier Vyacheslav Kebich and Anatoliy Malofeyev, the last leader of the Belarusian Communist Party.

Virtually half (50 people) out of 102 deputies elected in the second round are representatives from the Agrarian (26) and of Communist (24) parties. Other parties won only one or two seats.

Forty-five new deputies registered as independents. Representatives from the Agrarian (25 per cent) and Communist (22,7 percent) parties prevail among all 120 legislators elected in the two rounds.

As many as 60 percent of deputies represent the countryside. The overwhelming majority of them are chairman of the collective farms and directors of state farms.

Supreme Soviet Remains in Force

LD2905172295 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian
1100 GMT 29 May 95

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Minsk Central Electoral Commission has worked through the night on the results of the elections. We have just received a report from the capital of Belarus.

[Correspondent Lyudmila Vilyuga] Generally speaking, thanks to rural areas, the second round of elections to the new parliament of Belarus has been validated, since, out of 56 percent of those who took part in the voting, the majority comes from villages and district centers and regions.

In many urban constituencies, the elections proved invalid, and in Minsk as a whole there is no result, only 38 percent of the voters — who failed to return a single deputy — went to the polls. Incidentally, the entire upper political elite was balloted in the Belarus capital.

According to preliminary data from the Central Electoral Commission, 128 deputies have been elected in the republic as a whole, of which 100 are representatives of the authorities, farmers, and communists.

However, the number of those elected is insufficient for the new parliament to undertake its duties since, according to the Law on Elections, no less than two-thirds of the 260 deputies should be elected. For this reason, it is probable that the electoral campaign will go through another round in autumn.

[Begin A.M. Abramovich recording, chairman of the Belarus Central Electoral Commission] In operation under the constitution, legally speaking, and I am speaking as a lawyer, the previously elected parliament, that is, the Supreme Soviet, is in operation. [end recording]

Speaker Hryb Among Those Reelected

LD2905185895 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1600 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A parliament without people from Minsk and a republic without a parliament — a brief description of the situation which has come about in Belarus following the second round of parliamentary elections held on Sunday 28 May. [passage omitted]

Among those who gained a seat yesterday were Mechyslaw Hryb, the speaker of the current parliament; Vyachaslaw Kebich, former Prime Minister; Anatol Malafeyew, the last first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus; Vasil Novikaw, former communist presidential candidate; Uladzimir Grygor'ew, former head of the Vitebsk Region party organization. [passage omitted]

Composition of Elected Deputies Outlined

WS3005084995 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0700 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The preliminary results of the legislative elections show that the Agrarian Party secured most, 31, seats for its members, which accounts for 25 percent of those elected. Communists have come out second with 27 deputies, which is 23 percent; 3 individuals have been elected from the Party of Popular Accord after the two election tours; 1 individual from the Social Democratic Assembly, the Peasants' Party, and the Green Party. Not a single candidate from the Belarusian Popular Front has been elected legislative deputy. The 120 elected deputies include 40 collective farm chairmen, eight enterprise directors, 22 state officials, 10 employees of the presidential administration, nine entrepreneurs, six teachers, four lawyers, three scientists, three militia [Interior Ministry] employees, three health care workers, and two servicemen, as well as one worker, collective farm worker, journalist, and KGB employee. As many as 10 deputies of the former parliament have been elected.

Election Violations Pointed Out

WS3005104695 Minsk BELAPAN in Belarusian 0800 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Conducting free and fair elections is one of the basic requirements for a country to join the Council of Europe [CE]. And at the present time Belarus has failed to comply with this demand. This is the opinion of Mr. Gunnar Jansson, Rapporteur of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly. In a press release, issued by the delegation of the Council of Europe [CE] that came to Belarus to observe the legislative elections, it is pointed out that the shortcomings that were monitored in the first round had not been eliminated in the second round. Mrs. Elizabeth Schroedter, the leader of the European Parliament [EP] delegation, said that "the fact the European Parliament observed both rounds of the elections in an intensive way demonstrates our commitment to Belarus. For this reason I deeply regret that a new parliament cannot yet be formed, and that the process of political dialogue with Belarus at a parliamentary level, in the framework of our Agreement, cannot yet be initiated." The EP delegation noted that minor irregularities such as family voting, appeared to have increased as compared to the first round of elections on 14 May. The observer group of the OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights noted in its press statement that the observation of the second round confirmed flaws in the election law, which often left room for a wide range of differing interpretations. All international observers noted that one of the main shortcomings of the elections was the infringement of the rights of the mass media and the lack of information about political parties and candidates. The OSCE observers' press statement reads that it is also essential that political parties and candidates enjoy proper access to the national media. And this condition was not fully met in Belarus. In the press release of the Council of Europe representatives it was pointed out that the restricted access to the media and the limit on the use of financial resources during the preelection campaign had led to the shortage of information about candidates and the almost complete absence of political debates before the elections. The observers hold that Belarus should ensure a more strict application of the constitutional regulations concerning the mass media (Article 33). The leader of the CE delegation Mr. Jean-Pierre Berge expressed perplexity about the fact that President Lukashenka had disregarded the request to send his representative to meet the delegation. All international observers expressed regret that low voter participation led to the fact that the quorum needed for the new parliament to convene was not reached. All international observers noted that in general the elections had been held in a peaceful and organised manner though some irregularities had taken place.

Assessing the press coverage of the elections the European Institute for the Media pointed out in its press release that during the monitoring "the state and in particular President Alyaksandr Lukashenka exercise an undue and unhealthy influence over the functioning of the media in Belarus." The Institute's mission holds that "President Lukashenka intervened directly to make management changes in four leading newspapers prior to the elections, and the coverage of the 14 May national referendum was evidence of a clear pro-Presidential policy." Its press release reads: "The second round election coverage was virtually non-existent, for which a number of reasons may be posited. First, the presidential decree on 30 March 1995, which restricted presentation of constituency candidates to their own local media, clearly reduced the role of national media in the campaign coverage. Second, prior to the first round of elections, the president had stated his own intention to not take part in the elections, providing further disincentive for the media to take an active stance following the campaign. Third, the majoritarian electoral system in Belarus, especially given the weakness of political parties here, made coherent analysis of the campaign at a national level very difficult. Fourth, the referendum on 14 May 1995 was considered by the president to have been much more important than the elections".

Moldova

OSCE's Gyarmati Favors 14th Army Withdrawal

AU2705195295 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau INFOTAG 26/5/1995 — Mr. Istvan Gyarmati, personal representative of the chairman-in-office of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), believes the Russian 14th Army ought to be withdrawn from the Moldovan territory — under international control. He stated that at today's press conference upon conclusion of his familiarization visit to Chisinau and Tiraspol.

The diplomat has stressed, that is not the question of removing or not removing. It is the question of when and under what circumstances the Army ought to be removed.

"The Army Withdrawal Agreement has been signed, and period of the withdrawal determined. This is very important. The next step should be the beginning of the withdrawal," Gyarmati stressed.

Commenting his attitude to Lebed's proposal to impose peacekeeping functions in the region on the 14th Army, Istvan Gyarmati stated his deep conviction that "this is inadmissible. Peacekeeping functions cannot be performed by armed forces of one country. Besides, the troops need to be specially trained for that. Meanwhile, the 14th Army servicemen are trained only to attack or to defend, and are not familiar with peacekeeping work."

He stressed that the army withdrawal should not be synchronized with the Dniester settlement, for these are two parallel, independent processes. This has been stated in the documents of the last-year's Budapest summit, which were signed, among other, by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Istvan Gyarmati expressed confidence that the Dniester dispute will be settled before the 3-year term fixed for the army removal.

To finally settle the Dniester conflict, the sides should activize the negotiation process, Istvan Gyarmati said at Friday's press conference.

The OSCE Permanent Mission to Moldova might render assistance in settling the dispute, but, still, the sides' wish to achieve success is essential. The OSCE suggests that the 13th Report of the Mission be used as the basis for the negotiation process.

In his opinion, the report, which has been prepared almost 1.5 years ago, is not obsolete at all, because very little progress has been achieved in the negotiations during that period.

"I am well informed on the propositions and draft laws of the conflicting sides, and I believe the OSCE Mission's report is more acceptable for both sides. The OSCE has none of its interests in that, and it imposes no opinion of its own, and does not support any of the two sides. It only seeks to bring their positions together, as close as possible," he stressed.

Mr. Philip Hahn, head of the OSCE Mission, who is finishing his diplomatic work in Moldova soon, has stated the recent slowing down of the negotiations is caused by some objective reasons, including the local elections held on both sides of the Dniester. He does not share Lebed's opinion that both Chisinau and Tiraspol leaderships should quit to achieve final Dniester settlement.

Mr. Gyarmati pointed out that the Dniester conflict differs from other similar disputes by the civilized approach to its settlement. It is very positive that there is no shooting in the zone, he said, and warned against "conservation of the situation, when there is neither war, nor peace."

He said, an agreement has been reached that OSCE diplomats will be taking active part in the work of the

Joint Control Commission, and will be travelling freely in the security zone. However, no official document has been signed on the issue, due to the reluctance of the Dniester representatives in the Joint Control Commission.

14th Army Cleared of Serious Violations

LD2605204295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1847 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TIRASPOL, May 26 (INTERFAX) — The Russian Defense Ministry's special commission led by deputy head of the Inspection Department Colonel-General Bessmertnykh, has not revealed any serious violations in Russia's 14th army now located in Transdniester.

Sources in the army's headquarters told INTERFAX that the commission's main goal was to check on the complaints from the Tiraspol administration against army commander Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Lebed. One of Tiraspol's allegations was that Lebed was accusing Igor Smirnov, president of the self-proclaimed Transdniester republic and his administration of corrupt dealings and bribe-taking. In its turn, the Smirnov administration is making efforts to remove Lebed from his post.

The commission stated that the Tiraspol leaders' complaints were absolutely unfounded. The commission members will stay in Tiraspol until Lebed's return from Moscow, in order to meet with him personally and review the case with more objectivity. General Lebed took part in the State Duma hearings this week and is still in Moscow.

The army's headquarters denied the rumors that Lebed's prolonged stay in Moscow was connected with his work and with talks at the Defense Ministry.

Popov 'Concerned' Over Duma Decisions on 14th Army

AU2705201395 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau INFOTAG 26/5/1995 — The Moldovan minister of foreign affairs, Mihai Popov, expressed bewilderment and concern about the decisions of the Russian State Duma on the 14th Army.

He said to INFOTAG before leaving for the CIS Summit in Minsk that he will inform the CIS foreign ministers on the current situation, because "the Russian parliamentarians' decision has violated the agreement on maintaining peace and stability in the CIS recently signed by the CIS heads of state in Almaty."

According to Popov, the Duma's decisions have, in fact, imposed a moratorium on the Army withdrawal, and put the troop removal in dependence on the Dniester conflict settlement.

"Behind the smoke screen of the necessity to safeguard the armaments, the Duma has actually supported the Dniester separatism. The recent visit of the Duma's delegation to Chisinau has shown that they sought to only create a semblance of studying the problem deeply. In reality, their decision concerning the Army had been long ready," Popov stressed.

He expressed hope that the Federal Assembly and President Yeltsin will decline the draft law adopted by the Duma at the first reading.

"If this document is finally adopted, it will not only influence negatively the Dniester conflict solution but will also cause damage to the traditional relations of friendship and cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation," the minister emphasized.

Sangheli, Iran's Habibi Discuss Relations

LD3005090095 Tehran IRNA in English 0811 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, May, 30, IRNA — Iran's First Vice President Hassan Habibi and Moldovan Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli discussed matters of mutual interest as well as bilateral relations in the first round of their talks here Monday night [29 May].

Ministers of road and transport Akbar Torkan, commerce Yahya ol-Eshaq and agriculture 'Isa Kalantari are accompanying Habibi in his one-day visit to Moldavia.

Promotion of trade, political and agricultural relations as well as international transportation and bilateral investments were among major topics discussed by the two sides.

The two countries also agreed on the formation of joint committees in such areas as trade, oil, banking, customs, transportation, industry, agriculture, science and culture.

Before arriving in Moldavia, the Iranian delegation had paid a five-day visit to Croatia.

Habibi and Croatian Premier Nikica Valentic inked two political letters of understanding and three agreements for air, ground and sea transportation earlier on Monday.

The two officials supported full establishment of Muslim-Croat federation in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as annexation of territories under the occupation of Croatian Serbs to the country.

The Iranian delegation signed an agreement for the purchase of four ships from Croatia and the two sides explored avenues for the purchase of Iran's oil by Croatia as well as exchange of other commerical goods.

Gagauz Hold First Parliamentary Elections

LD2805163495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1434 GMT 28 May 95

[By Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KOMRAT, May 28 (ITAR-TASS) — Gagauzia, an autonomy in southern Moldova, held its first elections on Sunday [28 May] to elect a parliament and head of the administration.

The polls will also have to decide which of the two towns — Comrat or Ciadir Lunga — will become the region's capital.

Four candidates are vying for the position of the head of the administration — Stepan Topal and Mikhail Kendigelyan, both present leaders of the Gagauz autonomy, Dmitriy Krotoir, head of the Ciadir Lunga district, and Georgiy Tabunshchik, former Communist Party leader in Comrat.

The 35 seats in Gagauzia's new parliament are being contested by 107 candidates from the ruling Agrarian Democratic Party of Moldova, the newly restored Communist Party of Moldova and the local Gagauz People's Party Vatan (motherland).

The Moldovan parliament granted Gagauzia autonomy in December 1994 to resolve the Gagauz issue which emerged in 1990 when Gagauz, a Turkic Christian group, seeking ethnic revival proclaimed independence in southern Moldova. The Moldovan authorities tried to quell the conflict by force and only the interference of Interior Ministry troops helped prevent a bloodbath.

The Gagauz knot was untied only after the Agrarian Democratic Party had come to power in Moldova and got a law granting Gagauzia autonomy approved by the parliament.

Under the law, the Gagauz autonomy will live by the Moldovan Constitution and normative acts adopted by the Gagauz People's Assembly. The law says that the official languages in the autonomy are Gagauz, Moldovan and Russian. Gagauz will also be allowed to use their own state symbols.

In addition, the law says that in the event of any changes in Moldova's state and legal status, including its reunification with Romania, Gagauzia will have the right to external self-determination.

Early Returns From Gagauzia Elections

LD2905122995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1020 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU, May 29 (INTERFAX) — More than 76 percent of Gagauzia's residents with the right to vote went to the polls on Sunday [28 May] to elect a regional head of state and a parliament. Elections took place in 28 of the 35 electoral districts in the region.

The Central Electoral Commission reported to INTERFAX with reference to early returns from the head of state elections, 45 percent of the ballots were cast for Georgiy Tabunshchik, first secretary of the Comrat (Gagauzia's capital -IF) area committee of Moldova's Communist Party. The current chairman of parliament in the self-proclaimed Gagauz Republic, Mikhail Kendigelyan, secured 24 percent of the vote. Both candidates qualified to run in the second round of elections to be held in two weeks.

In parliamentary elections, the Gagauz party Vatan (Homeland) received nine mandates, Moldova's Communist Party won eight mandates, and a branch of Moldova's ruling Agrarian-Democratic Party got three mandates. Eight independent candidates were also elected into the Gagauz parliament in which seven remaining vacancies are to be filled after a run-off vote in a fortnight.

The elections coincided with a referendum on Gagauzia's capital. A total of 55 percent of voters favored that Comrat continue to be the capital of the unrecognized Gagauz Republic.

Tabunshik Wins First Round of Elections

AU3005113095 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau INFOTAG, 29/5/1995 — Last Sunday's elections of the Bashkan (Head), the Popular Assembly (Parliament), and the Administrative Centre of Gagauz Yeri was attended by over 76 percent Gagauz electorate. The elections were valid in 28 out of 35 districts, INFOTAG was told in the Gagauz Central Election Commission.

The Popular Assembly of 35 will include 9 deputies of Vatan (Motherland) Party, 8 communists, 3 agrarian democrats, and 8 independent deputies, with most of them supporting the Socialist Party which did not participate in the elections as a separate force. Another 7 deputies are to be elected in two week's time, at repeated voting.

As was expected, the biggest chances to become the Bashkan are with George Tabunshik, the former-time first secretary of the Comrat Areal Committee of the Communist Party, who polled 45 percent votes at the election. The current Gagauz Parliament chairman Mikhail Kendigelean received 24 percent votes. The two gentlemen will continue the struggle in two weeks.

Two other candidates — Chairman of the Ciadar-Lunga Areal Executive Committee Dmitry Croitor and president of the unrecognized Gagauz Republic Stepan Topal have polled 16 and 11 percent, respectively.

Parallel with the above two elections, a referendum to determine the Gagauz administrative centre was held. Fifty-five percent electorate voted in favour of Comrat and 43 percent — for Ciadar-Lunga. The Comrat option was particularly favoured by voters in the Vulcanesti and Taraclia areas, who also showed support for the most radical Vatan Party and for Mikhail Kendigelean. Citizens of Comrat and Ciadar-Lunga mostly supported communists, George Tabunshik and Dmitry Croitor.

As was forecast by many political observers, most Gagauz residents have voted for "the quiet life and stability that used to be in the epoch of the communist rule."

That was exactly the motivation voiced by most voters with whom INFOTAG correspondents spoke to on Sunday in Comrat and other localities. An absolute majority of them voted for George Tabunshik.

"I attribute myself to young generation, and I do not remember very clearly the time when Tabunshik was the first secretary of the Areal Communist Party Committee here. But I remember very well that we used to live happily and without troubles. I went to school, and could reliably plan my further studies. All of us were confident about our future. Currently, there is no such confidence, and our life is worsening with each coming day. I wish to believe that after Mr. Tabunshik returns to power we will be confident about our tomorrow's life again," said Ekaterina Iamboglo, a housewife from Comrat.

Peter Tkachenko of Comrat said he had voted for Tabunshik and communists so that order was restored in the region.

"Communists knew how to maintain order. I hope they will return, put everything in order, so that grass-root people are never more neglected. Maybe, communists will arrange our receiving pensions without delay, for now the arrears are 4-5 months. Maybe they will begin restoring the economy of this backward agrarian region which has suffered greatly due to political ambitions and break-up of economic ties," he said.

Maria Mavrodi — chairperson at the polling station in the Comrat Pedagogical College and a relative to Sergei Mavrodi, president of the ill-famed and formerly giant company of MMM [expansion unknown] of Moscow — said she did not have a minute's doubt that Tabunshik would be the winner.

"God knows whether it's good or bad, but you cannot switch off people's memory. The nostalgia for the past life is very strong, and it will bring Tabunshik to power again. Comrat residents are voting mostly for him and, partly, for current president Stepan Topal. Others have very weak chances," the woman said.

However, her opinion was not shared in other localities. For instance, many Ciadar-Lunga residents voted for "their" man, the current chairman of the Areal Executive Committee Dmitry Croitor, the local respected celebrity. At the second phase of voting, these people will, evidently, give their votes to Tabunshik, because Ciadar-Lunga does not like very much the Comrat leaders in general, and Mikhail Kendigelean, the second finalist, in particular. However, the Komrat leaders managed to harvest some votes in the countryside, mostly in the Vulcanesti area.

"Mikhail Kendigelean is a man from people's masses. He has been with us during all these hard years, when Tabunshik and the like enjoyed their problem-free living in Chisinau. We realize that Kendigelean would be hardly able to change our life for the better rapidly. But the strangers would not, either," Fedor Malak, a Vulcanesti factory worker, said.

Summing up possible voting results, Nikolai Stoyanov of the Gagauz Central Election Commission said: "A peaceful power takeover has taken place. One party made the revolution. Another party will be ruling."

To a certain extent, this view has been shared by Stepan Topal, who said that "people are nostalgic for the past, and this should be understood. The current social conditions are extremely hard. People are suffering, and they are voting for their past when there was enough bread, milk, meat, when salaries and wages were paid without delays, and they were sufficient to live on. During the last several years of our national revival we have been involved in politics thus having no possibility to solve economic problems. By now, political problems have been practically settled, and the new Komrat authorities will have to pay serious attention to economic matters and crime prevention," Topal stressed.

Speaking about the role of political leaders whose change seems inevitable in Comrat, Stepan Topal said that "one should not forget the people who cherished the idea of establishing the Gagauz autonomy, and whose political activity allowed the Gagauz to state about themselves as a nation. Only 5 years ago the Gagauz, currently well-known all over the world, were practically totally unknown to anybody. I have met three times with Mikhail Gorbachev, the then USSR President. I saw he was making efforts to grasp the essence of our problems. Alas, he did not even know how to pronounce the word 'Gagauz' correctly," Topal said.

In his opinion, the efforts of the Comrat leaders "allowed to solve many problems faced by the Gagauz, to preserve their ethnic identity, and the example of solving the Gagauz problem in Moldova can serve an example to follow in settling similar conflicts in Abkhasia, Chechnya, the Crimea."

Stepan Topal also believes that "the new Comrat authorities should strengthen economic relations with neighbour countries." Topal said to journalists at a polling station in downtown Comrat last Sunday that "Gagauzes are grateful to large and small peoples who have been helping us all these years, and we understand that the economic crisis can be overcome only through cooperation."

Stepan Topal stressed that Gagauzia should not be oriented only to Turkey, but should have good neighbourly relations with all nations. "We are blood brothers with Turks, though they are Moslems, while we are Christians. We are very much alike, and speak similar languages. And still, we should equally develop cooperation with other countries. We cannot neglect, for instance, the almost 200 years of our life with Russia," Topal said.

He also spoke for cooperation with Dniester, having stressed the necessity to implement the treaty on political, economic and cultural cooperation signed several years ago by the two self-styled republics.

He spoke in favour of granting a special political status to Dniester in the framework of independent and sovereign Moldova. Topal emphasized that "should there be any threat of violation of Gagauzia' current status or a military threat from behalf of any forces, the Gagauz will be counting on Dniester's help, as it was in early 1990s.

As Mikhail Kendigelean, chairman of the Gagauz Parliament, said at a meeting with the electorate, Dniester used to render a substantial (including fiscal) assistance to Comrat in maintaining its power structures and the Budjak guard battalion. In his words, the funding has been ceased as soon as Comrat had accepted Chisinau-proposed status of the Gagauz region.

There is practically no doubt that George Tabunshik will become the Gagauz Bashkan. His yesterday's 45 percent votes are going to be supplemented by at least 15-20 percent votes of those who voted for Dmitry Croitor last Sunday. Gagauz radicals dislike the perspective, for they believe "Tabunshik is a placeman of Chisinau, and he will be conducting a pro-Chisinau policy."

There is a grain of truth in such statements — at least because Tabunshik have been living in Chisinau for several years by now, and was favoured by the Moldovan leadership during his election campaign.

However, his "pro-Chisinau politics" may be restricted by the Popular Assembly. After the first round of elections, there is a relative balance of forces in the forum — between supporters of Chisinau and radically-minded advocates of the Gagauz independence. The second round of voting will show a much fiercer struggle for the remaining 7 seats in the Assembly. If the votes will be shared in a more or less equal proportion, then the Gagauz Parliament may be going to have an approximate balance of forces from the very beginning, which will make impossible to pass key decisions in future.

Kazakhstan

President Addresses Nation on End of Nuclear Testing

LD2605195795 Almaty Kazakh Television First Program Network in Russian 1400 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] We are carrying an address by the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to all citizens of the republic.

[Begin Nazarbayev recording] Dear compatriots, a long period in the history of Kazakhstan, which was connected with testing and siting nuclear weapons on our land is being concluded. The last nuclear charge [zaryad] is to be destroyed on the territory of the former Semipalatinsk test site.

For many years the long-suffering people of Kazakhstan have been experiencing the whole burden of international nuclear fever. During almost 45 years, 459 nuclear explosions, including 113 in the atmosphere, have been carried out on the Semipalatinsk steppe. The health of half a million residents of Kazakhstan, who received radioactive radiation, has been scarified to the senseless nuclear arms race. The enormous material and moral damage caused to our people is incalculable.

Naturally, such a state of affairs could not suit either the residents of the republic or its president. The unceasing pain of the victims, the sharp sword over our heads, has prompted me to follow commonsense, to listen to the voice of my heart.

In August 1991 I by decree closed the Semipalatinsk nuclear site. However, our land continued to hold in itself the terrible heritage of the cold war — the last nuclear charge that had been placed there by the military departments of the former Soviet Union before the site's closure. In that time just a narrow circle of experts from Kazakhstan and Russia knew about the existence of the danger. Nevertheless I, as head of state, constantly thought about the necessity of eliminating it, because there could not even be talk of a nuclear explosion, albeit the last one. At my instruction, ways of terminating the charge that are safe for people and the environment have been worked out. As a result, the experts have taken the optimum decision to destroy the charge with an ordinary explosive device. This will not cause a nuclear explosion as it is. The possibility of a leakage of radiation and X-rays have been completely eliminated. The liquidation of the nuclear charge will take place between the end of May and the first 10 days of June. The whole process of work on opening the charge was under my constant control. Nowadays I regularly have on my desk information on the final phases of the unique operation. Kazakhstan is thus ensuring strict control over the actions of the military personnel and experts.

Dear residents of Kazakhstan, in a few days the nuclear history of our state will be ended through the efforts of the Kazakh and Russian liquidators. Since gaining genuine independence we have been persistently and consistently pursuing this goal. Let us remember the Almaty declaration adopted in December 1991, under which the republics possessing nuclear weapons at once defined the mechanisms of joint control. Afterward we put our signature to the Lisbon protocol signed by five countries, taking upon ourselves the responsibility for observing the treaty on the reduction and restriction of strategic offensive arms. In 1993 another historic event took place: Kazakhstan adhered to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty turning in fact into a nonnuclear state. The security guarantees, which the nuclear powers have given our state are evidence of support by the world community for our firm position on the issues of disarmament.

Kazakhstan acts strictly in line with its international commitments. At the end of April this year the last lethal warheads were withdrawn from the territory of the republic. From now on the people of Kazakhstan do not have to fear a nuclear genie that was always threatening to set itself free. There is no doubt that once the nuclear weapon is destroyed our country will become much stronger. Displaying our adherence to the policy of peace and cooperation we not only brought the spirit of tranquillity and stability into our own home but also opened the doors widely to equal and fruitful dialogue with all countries, and firmly stepped out onto the path of reforming society and building a democratic and flourishing state.

I strongly believe that all citizens of Kazakhstan, for whom a clear sky, unblemished by the smoke of war is of the highest value, are supporting me, because there is no greater happiness than being confident in tomorrow, bringing up children in peace and preserving the fire in the family hearth.

Dear citizens of Kazakhstan, I hope that our country will fully use the historic chance given us and reach the main path of civilized development. I wish peace, prosperity, happiness, all good things, and tranquillity to you all. [end recording]

Nursultan Nazarbayev, 26 May 1995.

Last Nuclear Charge To Be Destroyed

LD2605170495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English, 1644 GMT 26 May 95

[By Vladimir Akimov, Amangeldy Akhmetalimov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, May 26 (Itar-Tass) — Kazakhstan is finalizing a long period of its history related to the storing and tests of nuclear arms. The last nuclear charge will soon be destroyed on territory of the former Semipalatinsk testing grounds, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said here today in an address to the nation.

"For many years the long-suffering people of Kazakhstan carried a heavy burden. Its soil buried a dreadful heritage of the Cold War — the last nuclear charge placed by military departments of the former Soviet Union before the testing grounds were closed down," says the address.

"There is no doubt our state will become even stronger after liquidation of nuclear arms. By showing our adherence to the policy of peace and cooperation, we not only bring the spirit of tranquility and stability to our home but also widely open the doors to an equal and fruitful dialogue with all states."

Toqayev: Russia, China 'Challenged' Sovereignty

LD2605181995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1555 GMT 26 May 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: by correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, May 26 (INTERFAX) — Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Qasymzhomart Toqayev told INTERFAX correspondent Irina Bektiyarova in Almaty on Friday [26 May] that Russia and China, as great powers, challenged Kazakhstan's sovereignty.

He said that "a small country, compared to its neighbors Russia and China, Kazakhstan must demonstrate a lot of flexibility and diplomatic astuteness." "The slightest error in foreign policy may cost Kazakhstan too dear," he added.

He noted, at the same time, that Kazakhstan's geopolitical position was giving it definite advantages, including the possibility of cooperation with the neighboring super powers.

Speaking about relations with China, Toqayev said that the two countries had laid a foundation for mutually advantageous cooperation. He also said that in April 1994, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Premier of China's State Council Li Peng signed an agreement on the borders, while in February 1995 Beijing made a statement on granting Kazakhstan nuclear security guarantees.

He denied the assertions that Chinese citizens might stream in to Kazakhstan, setting up Chinatowns. "All the talk about Chinese expansion is unfounded," he said. "Almaty and Beijing have attained complete mutual understanding on the issue," he added.

Presently, Kazakhstan is populated by about 20,000 ethnic Chinese.

Commenting on Kazakhstan's relations with Russia, he said that "despite individual problems, bilateral relations were quite satisfactory." He pointed out, however, that the problems of ethnic Russians and of the status of the languages are still to be solved.

He expressed hope that the Russian parliament would ratify the Kazakh-Russian agreement on citizenship as soon as possible. "This is vitally important for the ethnic Russians living in Kazakhstan," he said.

"The most important thing is that Almaty and Moscow are trying to tackle all problems in a civilized way," he said.

Tajik Delegation Leaders Comment on Talks

LD2905151295 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1100 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The fourth round of talks on the problems of Tajikistan is continuing for the eighth day in Almaty.

[Correspondent Baymbetov] Before the start of today's session, I asked the leaders of both delegations to state their positions on the main issue — the constitutional reorganization of Tajikistan.

[Begin recording] [M. Baydulloyev, leader of the government delegation of Tajikistan, identified by caption] When the people, by a majority, an absolute majority, 94.6 percent of the population, or, rather, of the electors, of whom more than 88 percent of their own free will and for the first time in history have adopted their constitution by means of a referendum, what this says is that we will not resort to the creation of any kind of anti-constitutional formations.

[A.Turajonzoda, leader of the opposition delegation, identified by caption] Unfortunately, our proposal on the transition period, on the creation of a national council involving both sides on an equal basis, has been rejected by the government. Today, we have prepared new proposals consisting of three points. [end recording]

[Baymbetov, over video of the sides preparing to enter a room for talks] These proposals are: the creation of a sociopolitical commission to work out proposals for introducing changes and additions to the constitution; a definition of the structure and functions of state bodies for the transitional period; the preparation of a joint message to refugees about their return to their homeland, but on condition that UN-controlled safe havens are established; and also the ending of legal proceedings against supporters of the opposition and the exchange of prisoners.

The opposition has made concessions, recognizing the institution of the presidency of Tajikistan. The reaction of the governmental delegation will be indicated by the outcome of the talks. [Video shows cars carrying officials to the talks venue, officials getting out of them]

World Bank Allows Loan Repayment Delay

LD2605110795 Almaty Kazakh Radio Network in Russian 0600 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Akezhan Qazhygeldin has received a letter from (Yukong Huang), the director of the European and Central Asian Countries Third Department of the World Bank. He welcomes the progress made by the government of the republic in implementing an institutional agreement between Kazakhstan and the World Bank on controlling foreign aid and development support. He also hopes for further progress in this sphere, which will substantially heighten the interests of donors in Kazakhstan on the eve of the Paris meeting of the World Bank consultative group [on Kazakhstan].

In his letter, Yukong Huang assures the prime minister that the repayment of the structural correction loan can be made by the end of this year on the condition that measures within the framework of a strategy for coordinated actions are taken in good time.

Kazakh-Canadian Gas Refinery Deal Signed

LD2905171295 Almaty Kazakh Television First Program Network in Russian 1100 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Talks to sign documents on a draft project to build a third unit at the new Zhanazhol gas refinery in Aktyube Region [northwest Kazakhstan] were held at the Cabinet of Ministers today.

[Unidentified correspondent] The aim of this draft project is to refine oil and gas condensate in the Novo-Zhanazhol and (Uriktau) oil and gas fields, which are in Aktyube Region. The total amount of crude oil and gas there, even at the most modest prediction of specialists, exceeds 130 million tonnes of oil and gas.

On behalf of Kazakhstan, First Deputy Prime Minister Vitaliy Mette, Nurlan Balghymbeyov, minister of oil and gas industry of Kazakhstan, (Khrapunov) [not further identified] took part in the talks.

A contract for the construction of the Novo-Zhanazhol plant was signed by the presidents of the companies Aktyubinskneft [Aktyube Oil] and Kazmunaygaz [Kazakh Oil and Gas], (Kamalov) and (Khasanov), and from the foreign side by (John Lakovich), the vice-president of the Canadian firm (SNC Lavalin).

At a news conference that followed the signing of the contracts, (John Lakovich) and Nurlan Balghymbeyov answered questions put by journalists. [video shows the news conference]

The estimated value of the project is over $476 million, and the period of recoupment is four to six months. After the construction of the plant Kazakhstan will gain the following benefits:

— an increase of oil extraction from 2 to 5 million tonnes a year;

— an improvement in the quality of oil products; and

— a remarkable increase in the production of sulphur, plus [an increase in] gas extraction to half a billion tonnes a year.

Of course, these figures are impressive. But, it is no less important that the local people of Aktyube Region will be provided with highly-paid jobs. While, during the first year, oil being extracted will be transported to Orsk for refining. However, according to Oil and Gas Minister Balghymbeyov, an internal pipeline will gradually be built connecting the western part of the country with the east.

Journalists did not fail to put such a question: Why was the Canadian firm (Lavalin) chosen from among the various companies? The business plan presented by the Canadians met the tough requirements of the Kazakh side. They have already taken part in our projects since 1987, in the oil and gas sector. Moreover, this company is working on projects to build elevators, power stations, and the [Almaty] metro in Kazakhstan.

In a word, apart from the very rich Tengiz oil field, on which the joint venture Tengizchevroil is already working, Kazakhstan is starting to develop the no less promising Aktyube oil and gas field, the oil and gas of which will last for generations.

East Kazakhstan Miners Achieve Baltic Financial Deal

LD3005083795 Almaty Kazakh Radio First Program Network in Russian 0300 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] It has been reported from Ust-Kamenegorsk that there is a promising way out of the financial impasse at the Belogorskiy mining complex, which is facing a real threat of complete collapse.

The enterprise's administration has concluded a profitable long-term contract with an Estonian firm, Flin Corp.

The East Kazakhstan miners and the Baltic businessmen have come to an agreement on joint extraction, development, and marketing of the output. The first part of the investments which the complex has received has already been directed to financing output.

Kyrgyzstan

Ismailite Head Pays Factfinding Visit to Kyrgyzstan

LD2905074695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0626 GMT 29 May 95

[By Boris Maynayev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BISHKEK May 29 (Itar-Tass) — The world leader of Ismailites, Prince Aga Khan IV, arrived in Kyrgyzstan on a two-day fact-finding visit this Monday. The prince plans to meet President Askar Akayev, Prime Minister Apas Dzhumagulov and other officials.

In the opinion of informed sources, the head of Ismailites is interested in a possibility to widen the highway between the Kyrgyz city of Osh and Khorog, the centre of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of Tajikistan. The prince intends to supply humanitarian aid to Badakhshan residents over this road.

It is expected that the two sides at the Bishkek meeting will examine the situation in Tajikistan, exchange opinions on settling the conflict and will discuss struggle against drug trafficking.

Kyrgyz authorities hope that Aga Khan IV will render them financial aid in restoring cultural and architectural monuments as well as assistance in holding events connected with the celebration of the millennium of the "Manas" epos [as received].

Further on Aga Khan's Agenda

LD2905131295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1253 GMT 29 May 95

[By Boris Mainayev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bishkek May 29 (ITAR-TASS) — The world leader of Ismailites, Prince Aga Khan IV, arrived in Kyrgyzstan from Tajikistan on a two-day fact-finding visit on Monday. The prince plans to meet President Askar Akayev and Prime Minister Apas Dzhumagulov later in the day.

The Imam will hold talks on Tuesday with the speakers of the Kyrgyz bicameral parliament, Qadi of Kyrgyz Moslems Kimsanbaiaji as well as the ministers of defence, interior, culture and transport.

The prince also plans to meet the leaders of the Osh region in Kyrgyzstan. In the opinion of informed sources, the head of Ismailites is interested in a possibility to widen the highway between the city of Osh and Khorog, the centre of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of Tajikistan.

The prince now supplies humanitarian aid to Badakhshan residents from his own funds over this road. In the opinion of staff members from President Akayev's office, Aga Khan IV plans to boost considerably supplies of foodstuffs and medicines to Badakhshan.

The two sides at the meeting will discuss the situation in Tajikistan and examine struggle against drug trafficking. It is planned that, while meeting the defence and interior ministers, the prince will consider with them a possibility of reinforcing protection of humanitarian cargoes and stiffening struggle against the spread of drug addiction.

Kyrgyz authorities hope that the head of Ismailites will give them financial aid to restore cultural and architectural monuments and will help in holding events connected with the celebration of the millennium of the "Manas" epos.

Akayev Praises Tajikistan Peace Efforts

LD2905182595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1521 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BISHKEK, May 29 (Interfax) — Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev speaking on Monday said he expressed to visiting Ismailiya sect leader Aga-Khan IV his appreciation of the Khan's peace effort in Tajikistan.

He also spoke of a telephone conversation he had with Uzbek President Islam Karimov on the same day to discuss the situation in Tajikistan.

Akayev pledged his country's willingness to deliver food supplies to Tajikistan's eastern autonomy of Gornyy Badakhshan by way of a highway from Osh to Khorog.

Khan is also expected to meet Prime Minister Abdyzhapar Tagayev [name as received] on Monday followed by a visit to the Osh district in southern Kyrgyzstan the next day.

Tajikistan

Rakhmanov Receives Aga Khan, Discusses Peace Process

LD2705133995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1323 GMT 27 May 95

[By Galina Gridneva]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DUSHANBE May 27 (Itar-Tass) - Tajikistan's President Emomali Rakhmanov confirmed readiness of the Tajik leadership to cooperate with international organisations for reaching peace and stability in Tajikistan.

The Tajik president stated this in his speech at the meeting of public groups with Aga Khan IV, the spiritual leader of Ismaelites, in Dushanbe today. Aga Khan arrived in Tajikistan for a ten-day visit at the invitation of the government.

Rakhmanov said Tajikistan's internal and foreign strategy would be dictated by interests of it sovereignty and its constitution adopted in a referendum in November 1994.

Rakhmanov stressed that the constitution reflects the will of the majority of the population, and Tajikistan will be guided by the constitution in solving its issues.

"We reject any attempts at any form of pressure wherever they would come from, but we are ready to thoroughly discuss any constructive proposals if they do not contradict the letter and spirit of the basic law," Rakhmanov said.

Speaking of Tajikistan's relations with the CIS states, Rakhmanov said his people wants close integration with the CIS, first of all with Russia which Tajikistan sees as its strategic ally.

"To us Russia is a guarantor of peace in Tajikistan and in Central Asia as a whole. Moreover, the socio-political situation in the world depends on the stance of this great power," Rakhmanov said.

Rakhmanov Sees Russia as 'Strategic Partner'

LD2905184295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1537 GMT 29 May 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy, edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Emomali Rakhmanov praised the decision of the Russian and Belarussian presidents to remove the customs on the border between these two countries. He said he hoped that "all obstacles in relations between Russia and Tajikistan will also be removed in the future."

Rakhmanov said at a meeting between the Tajik public and Head of the Muslim Ismailis of the World Aga Khan IV, now on an eight-day official visit to Tajikistan, in Dushanbe on Saturday that Tajikistan was ready to develop equal partnership with all CIS countries. Rakhmanov added that Tajikistan considered Russia as its strategic partner. He said Russia was "a guarantor of calm, security and stability and the situation in the world to a large decree depends on the policy pursued by this great power."

Commenting on the present situation in Middle Asia, Rakhmanov said that "the situation remains very complicated." He said that given such a situation Tajikistan must set its foreign policy's strategic priorities taking into consideration the national interests of the republic.

The Tajik opposition's Chief Negotiator for talks with Dushanbe Akbar Turadzhonzoda said that the CIS summit in Minsk had failed to pay much attention to the Tajik problem. He told Interfax that "probably, Boris Yeltsin and the Middle Asian region's leaders did not have enough time to discuss the problem in detail."

Turadzhonzoda said he believed that the Russian president was not at present fully informed on the situation in Tajikistan. He said he understood this from the meetings between Yeltsin and the Uzbek and Kyrgyz presidents.

Nevertheless, Turadzhonzoda added that he was glad to hear Yeltsin saying that Russia would no longer accept deaths of Russian servicemen on the Tajik-Afghan border. Turadzhonzoda also praised the statement of Islam Karimov at the CIS summit. On the behalf of Middle Asia's three presidents Karimov proposed to Emomali Rakhmanov that he "should share power with the opposition."

UN Envoy Assesses Almaty Inter-Tajik Talks

LD2605174695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1725 GMT 26 May 95

[By Arkadiy Rotmistrovskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Almaty, May 26 (ITAR-TASS) — The fourth round of inter-Tajik talks underway in the Kazakh capital remains tense, special representative of the United Nations Secretary-General Ramiro Piriz Ballon told a news conference here today.

The Tajik government representatives reject the opposition's proposal on essential changes in the Tajik Constitution and a transitional period of 1.5-2 years to be supervised by a mixed ruling body. The Tajik authorities agree to formation of a certain structure with consultative functions, including those concerning Constitutional provisions. First Tajik Vice-Premier Mahmadsaid Ubaydullayev insists on discussing the return of refugees from Afghanistan and ways to prolong the three-month cease-fire voiced at Kabul talks.

Ramiro Piriz Ballon suggested to form a high-level consultative council to submit proposals on a future state system of Tajikistan to the President and the government during the transitional period.

The sides have made a break till May 28. This period will be used by the delegations to decide on their stand.

Government-Opposition Talks Deadlocked

LD2805161095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1455 GMT 28 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, May 28 (Interfax) — A Tajik Muslim opposition leader said "no common language has yet been found" on Sunday at talks between Tajikistan's opposition and government.

Although the two sides have agreed to discuss what constitution the former Soviet republic should have in a "transitory period," the government "has made no compromises," said Ali Akbar Turadzhonzoda, head of the opposition delegation to the talks, held in Kazakhstan's capital Almaty and brokered by U.N. envoy Ramiro Piriz-Ballon.

Turadzhonzoda told Interfax that on Monday the opposition wanted to suggest appointing a joint commission to propose what changes to make to the constitution and what powers and functions to give to a "National Concord Council," a body the opposition would like to replace parliament in the transitory period.

Opposition is also willing to discuss the refugee issue raised by the government, Turadzhonzoda said.

Informed sources in Almaty told Interfax that early next week, most likely on Monday or Tuesday, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev planned to meet Piriz-Ballon and both delegations.

'Very Tense' Talks Continue

LD3005095495 Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan Network in Tajik 0500 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The fourth round of inter-Tajik talks is continuing in Almaty. Yesterday, our correspondent Mirzo Shohrukh Asrorov reported to us via telephone on the course of the talks. Here is his report.

[Asrorov] Today [29 May] the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks continued in Almaty. At 1000, a joint meeting of the delegations took place, and the heads of the delegations handed their additional proposals to Ramiro Piriz-Ballon, the UN secretary general's special envoy, and to each other.

Commenting on the additional proposals of the government delegation, [First Deputy Prime Minister] Mahmadsaid Ubaydullayevich Ubaydullayev, the head of the government delegation, said the following in the presence of the UN representatives, observers, and the opposition delegation:

The government delegation, consolidating its positive attitude set out at the Kabul meetings [between the Tajik president and the opposition Islamic Movement of Tajikistan], wants a complete cease-fire, the repatriation of all refugees, the approval of documents on an amnesty, on prisoners of war, on political parties and movements, as well as the proposal of the opposition on freedom of the media to be solved first of all. As these issues express the real interests of the Tajik people, their solution will promote the discussion of disagreements between Tajiks by peaceful means.

Then UN special envoy Piriz-Ballon had separate consultative meetings with both sides. After the consultations, the joint meeting continued its work, which was carried out in a very tense atmosphere.

Commenting on the position of the government delegation, Ubaydullayev, the head of the government delegation, said the following:

We do not want to allow law-breaking in the republic any more, because the civil war in the country in 1992 took place as a result of breaches of the law. Thousands of people were displaced, tens of thousands died, output was damaged and, as a result, the entire damage that Tajikistan sustained amounted to $7 billion.

The position of Tajikistan's Government, led by our President Emomali Sharipovich Rakhmanov, is a united one, and it is mentioned in the Constitution, which was approved by nationwide referendum as follows: We have created a democratic, legal, and secular state. Article 100 of the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan says that the governing structure of the republic, its territorial integrity, and the democratic, legal, secular, and social essence of the state are unchangeable. That is why the government will not allow any structures to be formed that run counter to the Constitution and international documents.

At the joint meeting, the opposition delegation put forward their position and their additional proposals as follows:

We fully recognize the institution of the presidency in the republic, and Emomali Rakhmanov as president, and make the following additional proposals:

A joint sociopolitical commission on introducing amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan is to be established.

A joint appeal to the refugees on their return to their permanent places of residence is to be approved.

In connection with the return of refugees, security zones in the Republic of Tajikistan are to be established, and all government military units are to be withdrawn from these zones, except the local militia.

The aforementioned and other proposals of this kind were once more rejected by the government delegation.

After sharp debates, the sides decided, at the suggestion of Piriz-Ballon, to discuss two issues proposed by the government delegation — i.e. fixing the terms for the repatriation of all refugees to the homeland before 9 September 1995 and on exchanging prisoners of war.

The plenary meeting decided to form working groups from the members of the delegations and consultants, so that a single document would be ready for discussion the next day.

I should like to mention that the sides reached mutual understanding to some extent on the other proposal of the government delegation, that is a complete cease-fire.

Ubaydullayev, the head of the government delegation, had a number of meetings with representatives of a number of international organizations. The talks are continuing.

Uzbekistan

Officials Hold Talks With U.S. Trade Delegation

LD2605171195 Tashkent Uzbekistan Television in Russian 1430 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] First Deputy Prime Minister Ismail Jurabekov of Uzbekistan received a delegation from the U.S. Department of Commerce headed by Jan Kalicki today.

The course of Uzbek-U.S. cooperation and the future prospects of our partnership were discussed during the talks. It was noted that the good work on putting the Zarafshan-Newmont joint venture into operation is a striking example of our mutually advantageous and successful cooperation. The parties considered the issues of further extending business contacts and attracting foreign investments in carrying out a number of major projects.

Deputy Prime Ministers Utkir Sultanov and Qayum Haqqulov; Rustam Azimov, chairman of the board of the National Bank for Foreign Economic Activity; Henry Lee Clarke, U.S. ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Uzbekistan; and other officials participated in the meeting.

Prime Minister Talks With U.S. Farming Delegate

LD3005081795 Tashkent Uzbekistan Television in Russian 1430 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Abdulhashim Mutalov today [29 May] received a representative of the American Cargill Enterprises firm. The Cargill Corporation is one of the largest companies in the world specializing in agricultural production. This company has achieved good results in growing and processing cereals, and in producing vegetable oil, sugar, and cotton fiber. The cooperation of our republic with this company in 1994 was worth $250 million.

Questions of further broadening mutually beneficial cooperation were discussed During the negotiations. The company in particular will supply the grain processing enterprises of our republic with modern equipment.

Deputy Prime Minister Utkir Sultanov took part in the meeting.

Uzbek-U.S. Gold Ore Processing Plant Commissioned

LD2705163195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1310 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tashkent, May 27 (INTERFAX) — The Central Asian republic of Uzbekistan is ready for additional annual production of 14 tonnes of sterling gold. Uzbekistan, which is the second largest gold-mining republic of the former Soviet Union, has put into commission an ore-processing plant near the world's largest gold quarry of Muruntau, the town of Zarafshan.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Uzbek-U.S. joint venture Zarafshan-Newmont to work in the quarry waste dump, Uzbek First Vice-Premier Ismail Jurabekov said Uzbekistan will gain no less than $1 billion from the 17-years-long project.

Under the U.S.-Uzbek agreement, the sides will share the proceeds 50/50.

The cost of the plant which employs only 320 people is $225 million. Most of the financing was made by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The enterprise will annually process 13,800,000 of ore which used to stay in waste dump.

Ronald Cambrey, President of the Newmont Mining company which owns 50 percent of the joint venture's capital, and First Vice-President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Ronald Freeman told INTERFAX the joint venture will use only the most advanced technologies which have been adopted only by South Africa and the United States, and the plant will stability work for no less than 50-60 years, in the opinion of specialists.

The annual gold production in Uzbekistan has been about 70 tonnes (the overall stock is estimated at 2,500-3,000 tonnes, 1,000 of which can be extracted). Some 50 tonnes of gold are now extracted by the Kyzylkumredmet concern (the former Navoysky metallurgical amalgamation) in the Muruntau quarry.

EU, Uzbekistan Agree on Cooperation

LD2605132295 Tashkent PRAVDA VOSTOKA in Russian 26 May 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] The first meeting of the joint committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the European Union on mutual cooperation has taken place. Taking part in it was an Uzbek delegation led by Otkir Sultonov, deputy prime minister and co-chairman of the joint committee; and a delegation of the European Union headed by (J. Maslen), co-chairman of the joint committee and head of the directorate of the commission for links with newly independent states of the European Union.

The head of the Uzbek delegation spoke about the political and economic reforms being implemented in the republic under the guidance of President Islam Karimov.

In his turn (J. Maslen) stressed the importance of the meeting of the joint committee, which has been the first official meeting between the representatives of the EU and the Republic of Uzbekistan. The chairman of the EU delegation also noted that Uzbekistan is of great importance to the European Union, especially in light of the substantial progress recently achieved in the sphere of economic reforms.

Some important decisions were adopted during the meeting. In particular, the commission of the European Union expressed its consent to extend an additional quota for textile produce exports from Uzbekistan.

The commission of the European Union decided to hold a special seminar in Tashkent on the new general preference system of the EU, which will allow Uzbekistan to carry out trade on a preferential basis with the countries of the European Union.

The sides agreed that the European Union would help Uzbekistan join the World Trade Organization, and within the TACIS [expansion unknown] program continue technical assistance, and extend the terms of the repayment of the credit given by the European Union to our country for purchasing medicine.

The possibility of Uzbekistan scientists taking part in European Union scientific programs was also considered.

A joint communique was adopted on the results of the meeting.

Karimov Interviewed on CIS Heads Meeting

LD2705200095 Tashkent Radio Mashal in Uzbek 1100 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The president of our country, Islam Karimov, who took part in the Minsk meeting of CIS Heads of State and Government yesterday, returned to the capital of our republic overnight from Friday to Saturday. A correspondent for the Uzbek national news agency, Amirqul Karimov, interviewed our president at Tashkent Airport.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] Islam Abduganiyevich, could you speak about the results of this 17th meeting of heads of CIS states? What will this meeting give to Uzbekistan, to the people of Uzbekistan?

[Karimov] If we look at the results of this meeting with a critical eye, then first of all, we are interested in economic questions. These include, say, the creation of a currency center. If we are to define a currency center, it above all means imposing order on the enterprises, mutual relations, and mutual settlements of all the independent states. Any aware person will understand that if we do not resolve this question, if we do not impose order on this matter, and if enterprises in Uzbekistan do not sort out and complete their settlements with plants or enterprises in Russia or other states in time...[pauses] These economic relations all come down to this. That is why we tried to resolve this matter. A resolution was adopted on this question. But as I have just said, these resolutions are fated to remain as mere pieces of paper and not to be fulfilled.

If we speak openly, in many, many respects the future of this CIS largely depends on Russia. That is, if Russia, being a great state, a large state, a powerful state — the state that connects the CIS states with each other — tries to bring resolutions that are adopted to their conclusion, if there is an all-round desire to bring resolutions that have been adopted to their conclusion, then many questions can be resolved.

Our approach to this is that we primarily want to benefit and gain from this CIS from an economic point of view, and the most difficult questions are currently those of how to create a single economic area, to remove difficulties relating to customs, railways, and other roads from our enterprises, and to ease their difficulties. These are our main aims.

A large delegation from Russia is to visit here in the near future. We also are going to hold talks on removing and eliminating these customs barriers between us. There was an agreement that Russian Prime Minister Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin is to come to Uzbekistan. We have decided that as soon as he arrives we will again try to resolve these questions. The reason is that many of our relations are connected mainly with Russia. If Russia's potential and authority assist our enterprises and promote all-round economic ties with us, many problems will be solved and our enterprises that are currently in a difficult position will certainly be resolved and made easier.

Problems relating to Tajikistan were discussed there. I again put my own thoughts on Tajikistan to them. Before my departure, I said on my own behalf, on behalf of Uzbekistan, on behalf of our people, and on behalf of our society that enough is enough; we should stop this kind of carry-on.

If this problem has not been resolved by the government of Tajikistan and the opposition by the end of 1995, then from 1996 we must stop providing our military assistance, our military forces, and all our help in general. The reason is that, first, it is wrong for the leaders who are in the center, in Dushanbe, to do as they like, and second, we adjoin its borders. In other words, [this will happen] if we continue our help and there is no mutual agreement, and if the Almaty meeting does not produce a mutual accord between the political forces in Tajikistan. I think that our own aim is a different one; our aim is to try to establish peace on our neighbor's land, in the land of Tajikistan, by taking advantage of every little opportunity.

There were many questions discussed there, but in general the most...[pauses] Matters relating to Abkhazia. In general there was discussion of certain things that are taking place, let us say, in certain CIS regions.

But overall, there were just these two issues: The economic one and what we have just spoken about, Tajikistan.

Another issue was that of protecting the borders. We did not sign the draft that was prepared on border protection.

The reason is that in our opinion, in the opinion of the government of Uzbekistan, we ourselves protect our own border. We do not need help. Thank God, we have the strength, potential, and forces to deal with and protect our border with a foreign state, i.e. Afghanistan. That is why we are absolutely against the creation of a unified command, a unification in this respect.

Such things will certainly be detrimental to our independence. Our public will understand this correctly. If we do not protect our border by ourselves, what kind of independent country can we call ourselves? That is why we set out our thoughts on this question. We said let those who want sign it, but Uzbekistan will protect its borders by itself.

We expressed our thoughts on some other similar questions, and did not sign documents on some questions for the time being. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Armenia

Prime Minister Discusses CIS Integration

NC2605163895 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1512 GMT 25 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] 25/05/95 NOYAN TAPAN—"The main task for CIS countries today is the development of integration processes,"- the Armenian Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan stated at the opening of the 8th session of the Council of Heads of the Ministries and Departments on cooperation in the sphere of machine-building on May 25.

According to the Prime Minister, such meetings promote the development of integration processes within the framework of the CIS. Bagratian pointed out that together with old technical and technological economic links which turned out to be inefficient for market conditions many efficient ones were lost during the transition to an independent statehood. In his opinion, lots of economic ties were lost on account of incorrect economic policy, in particular, customs policy.

Bagratyan pointed out that the CIS countries can be divided into three groups as far as the transition to market relations is concerned:

1. non-market countries or ones succeeded the centralized administration but already within the framework of their states;

2. countries lingering in the issue of transition to market economy;

3. countries which have already transited to market relations.

The latter ones, according to the Prime Minister, experienced economic growth during 1994-1995.

According to Bagratyan, Armenia is one of the CIS countries which abruptly transited to market economy. And it is a kind of example in this issue. "Armenia is the only CIS country experiencing industrial growth for the last two years", he pointed out.

51 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP) was produced by the private sector in 1994. According to preliminary data, this showing will exceed 70 percent in 1995. The GNP increased by 5 percent in 1995 as compared with the previous year.

The Prime Minister also noted that among the CIS countries Armenia is in the most difficult conditions of reproduction: It is isolated from communications, the great part of deliveries are implemented by air.

However, as he says, even under such conditions everything is done to reactivate the Armenian Nuclear Power Station.

Speaking on the necessity of restoration and development of old links, the Prime Minister stated that there were no artificial obstacles for trade in Armenia.

He also reported that the issue on establishment of universal accounting means within the CIS is supposed to be discussed at the Minsk consultation of the CIS Presidents and Prime Ministers.

It is also envisaged to take a decision on establishment of the CIS Monetary Committee in Minsk.

OSCE Delegation Arrives in Nagorno-Karabakh

NC2605191095 Yerevan SNARK in English 1448 GMT 25 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Stepanakert, MAY 25 (SNARK)—A high rank OSCE military mission led by Finnish General Heikki Vilen [name as received] arrived today in Stepanakert on a short visit.

The NKR [Nagorno-Karabakh Republic] Press and Information Department informed Snark that the delegation plans to meet the NKR civil and military leaders and to discuss possible deployment of peacekeeping international forces in the conflict zone. The delegation also intends to go to the front-line zone for reconnoitering the area.

Financial, Refugee Aid Agreements Signed With Germany

NC2605171795 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 251512 GMT 25 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] 25/05/95 NOYAN TAPAN—On May 25, a ceremony of signing of two intergovernmental agreements between Armenia and Germany was held in Yerevan. The first agreement concerned matters of financial co-operation and assistance to Armenian refugees in building their homes. The total amount of aid will constitute 5 million Deutchmarks. The second agreement concerns matters related to research and establishment of a fund of specialists (1.8 marks) [amount as received] and will provide assistance of German specialists in construction of hydro power stations on territory of Armenia, in protection of the environment as well as assistance to the private sector of the economy. The agreement does not provide, however, for improvement of qualification of Armenian specialists in Germany.

The agreement were signed by Minister of Economy of the Republic of Armenia Armen Yeghiazaryan and Federal Minister of Germany for issues of economic co-operation with developing countries Carl-Dieter Spranger. The ceremony of signing was attended by Charges D'Affairs of Germany to Armenia Norbert

Heinze, employees of German Embassy in Yerevan and other officials. This agreement is to be considered and approved by Bundestag on June 2.

At a press-conference held when the ceremony was over, Minister Spranger said that he was satisfied with results of his visit to Armenia during which he met and negotiated with Vice-President Gagik Harutyunyan, Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan and other officials. The German Minister also met with Catholicos of All Armenians Garegin I and students who study German at the institutes of Yerevan. The German delegation at the negotiations also included member of German Parliament Michael Gross.

Mr. Spranger said that it is possible that next year Germany will help the private sector of Armenia's economy for total amount of 13 million marks. He welcomed liberalization of the economy and process of privatization. In his opinion, Armenia has overcome the nadir of the economic crisis and the arguments in support of this included stabilization of national currency and implementation of agreements with IMF. Minister underlined that he was confident in successful development of bilateral connections between Germany and Armenia and pointed out that the aid received by Armenia is due to taxes paid by German taxpayers. He expressed a hope that Germany will support economic reforms going on in Armenia also through international financial institutions.

Replying to questions of journalists Spranger said that the assistance provided by Germany is of a kind called "assistance for self-assistance", i.e. Armenia has to overcome its difficulties itself, and Germany will help her as much as it can. He said that Germany does not sponsor governments which tend to change, but specially developed projects implementing the reforms. He expressed a wish for peace in the region which will strengthen the inflow of investments into the private sector of the economy.

Minister of Economy of Armenia Yeghiazaryan reminded to all those present about great aid which was donated by Germany to Armenia after the devastating earthquake of 1988. He reported that Germany is currently the second in amount financial donor of Armenia among the Western countries if we don't count the United States. This testifies to seriousness of Germany's intentions and positive evaluation of activities of the Armenian Government which has managed to stop the crisis, provide growth and start a wide-scale privatization process. According to Yeghiazaryan, the cease-fire in the region will provide opportunities for growth of financial investment into the economy of Armenia.

The German delegation is leaving for the capital of Azerbaijan on May 26.

Supreme Council Chairman Meets Russian Counterpart

NC2605194095 Yerevan ARAGIL ELECTRONIC NEWS BULLETIN in English 0906 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan ("Hayastani Hanrapetutyun" daily), 05/26/95—Chairman of RA [Republic of Armenia] Supreme Council Babken Ararktsyan met his Russian counterpart Vladimir Shumeyko in Moscow on May 25.

The sides discussed further development between the parliaments of our two countries, their participation in operation of CIS Interparliamentary Assembly, as well as several problems related with the regular Assembly On Economic Collaboration of Black Sea Basin Countries, to be held in Moscow on June 5-7.

Armenian Ambassador to Moscow Yuri Mkrtumyan, and Chairman of CIS Affairs Commission of Russian parliament Vadim Gustov participated in the meeting.

'Foreign Intelligence' Penetration Charged

NC2705202895 Yerevan SNARK in English 1111 GMT 27 May 95

["Foreign Intelligence Tries To Create Its Influence Sphere in Armenia, Says President's Former Security Adviser" — SNARK headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, May 27 (SNARK) — The secret structure 'Dro' in whose creation and activity the Armenian leadership accuses the 'Dashnaktsutyun' party was actually set up by the foreign-state intelligence services trying to build up a big sphere of influence. This announcement was made yesterday by Ashot Manucharyan, the former Security Adviser of President Ter-Petrosyan, who appeared at a joint opposition meeting in Yerevan.

'Dro' has penetrated not only the influential oppositional parties, he said, but even to more extent into the Government structures, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Charging the President and investigation bodies in that they put all blame for 'Dro' existence on 'Dashnaktsutyun', Manucharyan listed the principal objectives, in his viewpoint, of this secret organization:

— to excite hostility between Armenia and Russia,
— to disorganize the social groups in Armenia which back up this union, and
— to create an indignation outburst atmosphere in Armenia.

Manucharyan handed over the available documents on 'Dro' activity to law enforcement bodies, but they are more interested in liquidation of oppositional 'Dashnaktsutyun' party, he said.

Nuclear Power Plant Ready for Launching

LD2905183295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1537 GMT 29 May 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey [illegible]ovskiy, edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Armenian nuclear power station is ready for physical launching which has been confirmed by the rulings of a Rosatomenergo delegation led by the Vice-President of the Russian corporation Boris Antonov, the Armenian Vice-Premier Vigen Chitechyan told a news conference after the visit of the delegation.

He said that while now Armenia annually generates 650-700 megawatts of electricity, the second power unit of the nuclear station examined by the Russian delegation would generate 400 megawatts guaranteeing a 50 percent rise in electricity production.

In keeping with safety regulations the power unit is fit for loading with nuclear fuel which could happen in June. According to reliable sources, the uranium was flown by two planes from Russia a few days ago.

Speaking of nuclear safety Chitechian said that the station is equipped with Soviet reactors of the first generation that are not perfectly safe. But beginning with the stage of designing a number of steps were taken to increase safety. These efforts continue and will continue after commissioning.

The official announced that Armenia hoped for Western assistance, but this did not happen and the first stage of operations to enhance the safety of the station was conducted at Armenia's expense together with Russian organizations.

Speaking of waste dumping Chitechyan said that Armenia will carry out all requirements in keeping with international rules and agreements.

Azerbaijan

Aliyev Says Helsinki Peace Talks To Go Ahead

LD2905192595 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1801 GMT 29 May 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Sevindzh Abdullayev and Viktor Shulman]

[FBIS Translated Text] Baku, 29 May — The talks between the sides on settling the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, which are due to take place in Helsinki on 15 June, under the auspices of the OSCE, are to go ahead. Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev made this announcement at a meeting in Baku today with Vladimir Kazimirov, the Russian co-chairman of the OSCE Minsk Group on Nagorno-Karabakh. The Azerbaijani head of state was referring to an accord reached with Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan.

Aliyev, Kazimirov on Need To Resume Karabakh Talks

NC2905185595 Baku Azerbaycan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Azeri 1600 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Today Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev received Russian Foreign Ministry's ambassador for special missions, Vladimir Kazimirov.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] What was the result of the meeting between the head of state and Vladimir Kazmirov, who has often visited the conflict zone and who is one of the cochairmen of OSCE Minsk Group and the Russian President's ambassador for special missions? He met Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev regarding the peaceful resolution of the war.

First of all, Vladimir Kazimirov congratulated Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev on the republic's national day and wished peace and security for the Azerbaijani people. Then, he briefed Aliyev on the OSCE Minsk Group's recent session in Vienna. He expressed the cochairmen's position on the continuation of the talks and observance of the cease-fire.

Positively assessing the continued observance of the cease-fire, Vladimir Kazimirov indicated that the peace talks should be diligently pursued until the Major Political Agreement put forward by the Azerbaijani side is signed.

He added that the Armenian leadership's statement on the bombing of the gas pipeline entering Armenia via Georgia was also discussed in Vienna. He hoped such incidents will not lead to the freezing of the talks.

Geydar Aliyev noted that the Armenian leadership's statement is unfounded. No state can be held accountable for an incident in another country. Regarding the Azerbaijani position, the Azerbaijani leadership has always been ready for peace talks and wants the speedy signing of the Major Political Agreement. Azerbaijan is the injured party; it is its lands that are under occupation. It wants the Armenian Armed Forces to withdraw from its land.

It was also emphasized that the next round of talks will be held on 15 June.

The Azerbaijani president referred to his meeting yesterday with the Russian Fuel and Energy Minister Yuriy Shafranik and gave his views on the development of bilateral relations. Concrete proposals were put forward for the eventual resolution of the conflict through peaceful means. The talks between Aliyev and Kazimirov are continuing. [end recording]

Kazimirov Meets Foreign Minister

NC2905161195 Baku TURAN in English
0820 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (May 29) TURAN — On May 28 Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister, Gasan Gasanov, received the representative of Russian co-chairman of the OSCE Minsk Conference, Vladimir Kazimirov. He arrived in Baku from Vienna.

During the meeting Kazimirov informed the Azeri Foreign Minister about weekly session of the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna. They also exchanged opinions on the situation in the region. Kazimirov also informed Gasan Gasanov about joint statement of the OSCE Chairman and the OSCE Minsk Conference co-chairmen, which stresses inadmissibility of breaking of the negotiation process on settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. "The Minsk Group considers that one cannot connect any acts on the territory of the third countries with the course of these talks" Kazimirov said. He mentioned that the territory of the third countries has nothing to do with the conflict zone and the parties committed themselves with conduction of talks without preliminary conditions, the Russian diplomat said.

Minister Gasanov mentioned that besides breaking of the peace process, Armenia's activities can have for an aim worsening of relations between Georgia and Azerbaijan. "Azerbaijan respects the sovereignty and independence of the states, including Georgia, and cannot let interference in its internal affairs in this or that form", Gasanov mentioned.

Today Kazimirov is to meet with President Aliyev and Defense Minister, Sefer Abiyev.

OSCE Calls on Armenia To Return to Negotiations

NC2705204195 Baku TURAN in English
1152 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (May 27) TURAN — "I see no connection between explosion of the gas pipeline and peaceful talks. The Georgian Government must make every efforts to prevent these actions in order not to take peaceful talks hostages in these events", the Finnish Co-chairman of the OSCE Minsk Conference [MC] on settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, Rene Nyberg [name as received], said in his interview to BBC radio station.

Rene Nyberg mentioned that he has no facts proving Azerbaijan's involvement in the explosion of the gas pipeline on the territory of Georgia leading to Armenia.

The Finnish diplomat said that the possibility of breaking of truce has grown now. "If the peace negotiations are not resumed today, the ceasefire will be under a real threat", Mr. Nyberg said. For this purpose on May 25 the co-chairmen of the OSCE MC together with the OSCE Chairman called on the conflicting parties, including Armenia, to come back to the negotiation table.

Aliyev 'Satisfied' With Results of CIS Summit

NC2705202995 Baku TURAN in English
1152 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (May 27) TURAN — Last evening Azerbaijani delegation returned from Minsk to Baku. "I am satisfied with the results of the CIS summit", President Aliyev told the journalists at Bina airport.

Azeri President said that Azerbaijan did not sign several documents submitted for the summit. "The documents, which correspond to Azerbaijani state interests, were signed", he mentioned.

President Aliyev also mentioned that his meetings in Minsk were successful. During his meeting with the Russian Premier Chernomyrdin they discussed two basic issues — oil cooperation on the Caspian and deblockade of the northern transport-routes from Russia to Azerbaijan. "Premier Chernomydrin promised to settle this issue in the coming days", Azeri President said.

During his meeting with Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan President Aliyev refuted Armenian accusations of Azerbaijan's involvement in the explosion of the gas pipeline on the territory of Georgia. "Azerbaijan cannot bear responsibility for the events on the territory of Georgia. This statement is of propagandistic character", President Aliyev mentioned.

He said that he promised to reward President Ter-Petrosyan if he presents the facts proving Azerbaijan's involvement in this incident. President Ter-Petrosyan asked to permit transportation of gas to Armenia through the Kazakh, Azeri President said.

President Aliyev said that Azerbaijan did not sign the agreement on joint protection of the CIS borders due to occupation of part of its territory and state border of the republic.

"The distinctive feature of the summit was its democratic atmosphere, there was no pressure aimed at forcing of the republic to sign this or that document", President Aliyev mentioned.

Azeri President acknowledged that Azerbaijan will take part at the peace talks on settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict on June 15 in Helsinki.

He said that the next CIS summit will take place on November 3, 1995 in Sochi.

Armenia Called 'Military Appendix' of Russia

NC2605181995 Baku TURAN in English
1307 GMT 25 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (MAY 26) TURAN—"The opinion that if Azerbaijan will take all possible conditions of Russia and will obey it, Moscow will eliminate the aggression by Armenia and will promote liberation of Azeri territories is absolutely wrong," TURAN was told by State Advisor for Foreign Political Issues Vafa Gulizade. According to Gulizade Russia does not want to take any decisions for withdrawal occupational Armenian troops from the territory of Azerbaijan. "Moscow states on different levels that it is not up to Moscow and Russia cannot do anything, this matter should be solved between Azerbaijan and Armenia. But I am quite sure that Moscow have direct and decisive influence on Yerevan," State Advisor noted. In this respect Gulizade said Armenia has turned into military appendix of Russia and carries out just the Russian policy.

State Advisor said that "Russia, which is a mediator in the settling of Armenian-Azeri conflict has always forwarded proposals which were abusing independence and sovereignty of Azerbaijan."

*It is known that Moscow insists on location of its troops on the Iranian-Azeri border, concession in the issue concerning the status of the Caspian sea, location of its military bases and more integration in the economic structure of Russia.

German Economic Minister Meets Parliament Speaker

NC3005032595 Baku TURAN in English
1152 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (May 27) TURAN — Yesterday the speaker of Parliament, Rasul Guliyev, received the Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, Carl-Dieter Spranger.

During the meeting Rasul Guliyev stressed traditionally friendly relations between Azerbaijan and Germany. He said that there are good prospects for development of political and economic cooperation between both countries.

Minister Spranger mentioned that Germany is ready to render assistance to Azerbaijan in implementation of the economic reforms. He said that on May 28 he intends to take part at the ceremonial opening of take-off-landing strip built by German specialists on Baku's international airport.

Yesterday Mr. Spranger visited camps of Azeri refugees in Imishli and became acquainted with their situation.

Elchibey Issues National Day Message

NC2805045495 Baku TURAN in English
1151 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku (May 27) TURAN — Ex-President of Azerbaijan Abulfaz Elchibey congratulated people of Azerbaijan on the occasion of Day of Statehood of Azerbaijan "May 28". He called his compatriots to be careful and to defence the independence of the country. He stated that the way to freedom is the way of dignity and honour of Azeri people.

Republic of Azerbaijan proclaimed its independence on May 28, 1918. On April 28, 1920 Azerbaijan was occupied by Soviet Russia. On October 18, 1991 Azeri Parliament restored independence of the country and on May 28 the Day of Statehood was proclaimed.

Georgia

Flirting With NATO To 'Pressure' Russia

MM2605145395 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
26 May 95 p 3

[Report by Vladimir Statskiy under the "Near Abroad" rubric: "Georgian Coast, Turkish Coast. Official Tbilisi Is Prepared To Turn to NATO for Help in Conquering Abkhazia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi — "Naturally we are not delighted at the initialing of the Russian-Georgian treaty," Tevfik Okyayuz, Turkish ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Georgia, noted recently, with the stationing of Russian troops at the Turkish border in mind. "Our reaction," the ambassador emphasized, "is not directed against Georgia, but against the presence of a foreign state's troops here, or in other words, against Russia."

D. Berdzenishvili, a Georgian parliament deputy from the unified republican party, echoes the Turkish ambassador: "For me any formula for the existence and legitimization of the presence of Russian troops on Georgian territory is unacceptable."

For the sake of fairness, it must be noted that by no means everyone adheres to these views either in the parliament or in society. The Georgian population is realizing increasingly distinctly that without integration with Russia, the republic cannot get out of the abyss of economic and political difficulties. But some people are inclined to use military integration here as a kind of bargaining chip in return for the stationing of Russian military bases in Georgia. Certain politicians would like to solve the problems of Abkhazia and South Ossetia with the help of their influential northern neighbor. But is bargaining appropriate here?

Entirely appropriate, T. Nadareishvili, chairman of the Abkhaz Autonomous Republic Supreme Soviet (in exile) and vice premier of the Georgian Government, believes. According to him, the ratification of the treaty on military bases is only possible if the peacekeeping forces ensure the return of refugees to Abkhazia. And in as short a time as possible. Apart from that, Nadareishvili is proposing that the "blue helmets" perform certain maneuvers. First of all to restation themselves at the River Galizga, then the River Kodori, and finally to station themselves at the River Gumista. The aim of these displacements is to gradually "squeeze out" the peacekeepers to the northwest of Abkhazia. The zone of Georgian control will thus be extended, and this may be followed by a demand to relocate the peacekeepers beyond the River Psou, that is, with the help of such maneuvers, to restore full influence over Abkhazia.

The ideological leader and inspirer of Russian-Georgian cooperation, E. Shevardnadze, who called the initialing of the treaty a "harsh reality," stated openly that its ratification is only possible once the Russian side carries out these commitments to restore Georgian jurisdiction on the territory of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The fact that there is a plan to deploy one of the military bases in Gudauta, where a Russian airborne regiment is stationed, suggests that in the view of the Kremlin, the Georgian side's counter-conditions seem entirely feasible. Meanwhile, Georgian Defense Minister Lieutenant General V. Nadibaidze held an official meeting a few days ago with the aforementioned Turkish ambassador and military attache. T. Okyayuz, following tradition, noted the great significance which the Turkish Government lends to expanding military-political cooperation with Georgia. Readiness was expressed to give it all the help possible in the development of its armed forces.

V. Nadibaidze did not refuse the help. And here I would like to recall that at the end of April a NATO parliamentary assembly delegation made an official visit to Tbilisi. At the time, no secret was made of the fact that the main aim of the visit was a discussion of the prospects of Georgia's cooperation with NATO countries. Turkey too, it must be assumed. The Georgian side, once again through the lips of its leader, expressed interest in expanding contacts with the North Atlantic bloc. The possibility of Georgia joining it was also examined.

The flirtation with the Atlantic alliance can quite easily be assessed as an extra mechanism for putting pressure on Russia. If you don't want us to join NATO, guys, then solve our internal problems as quickly as possible. Which is a trump card in the bargaining over the Russian military presence in the Caucasus, isn't it?

Incidentally, high-ranking Western military figures seem to have become frequent visitors in Georgia. A few days ago John Shalikashvili, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrived on a visit here. Obviously he was motivated by more than just a desire to visit his historical motherland.

Shevardnadze, Russia's Yegorov Begin Round of Talks

LD2705155795 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0939 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, May 27 (ITAR-TASS) — A regular round of Russian-Georgian talks started early on 27 May with a face-to-face talk between Russian Deputy Prime Minister Nikolay Yegorov and Georgian Head of State Eduard Shevardnadze.

Although details of the talk are unknown, the likely subject is a comprehensive settlement of ethnic conflicts in Georgia's enclaves Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

This is suggested by a closed-door meeting in early hours of 27 May between Shevardnadze and North Ossetia's President Akhsarbek Galazov, who is a member of the Russian delegation.

The talks with broader membership will be continued later in a day.

Yegorov Condemns Separatism in Abkhazia

LD2905142895 Tbilisi SAKINFORM in Russian 1001 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [No dateline as received] — Russian Deputy Prime Minister Nikolay Yegorov [name and title as received], who led a Russian delegation [that visited Georgia 27- 29 May], has told journalists that the situation in Georgia will improve as soon as the conflict in Abkhazia is settled. Speaking about the position of the Russian state on this issue, the Russian deputy prime minister categorically declared unequivocal support for the territorial integrity of Georgia. According to Yegorov, official Russia condemns separatism in Abkhazia just as it condemns separatism in Chechnya. There is no ground for ethnic conflicts in Georgia, believes Yegorov, citing the example of multiethnic Ajaria, where the situation has been stable.

Russian Delegation Signs Treaty

LD2705170895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1659 GMT 27 May 95

[By Albert Kochetkov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, May 27 (ITAR-TASS) — A Russian delegation led by Vice-Prime Minister Nikolay Yegorov, Minister of Nationalities and Regional Policy, ended the visit to Tbilisi on Saturday.

Yegorov signed a treaty of cooperation with the Georgian Committee for Human Rights and Intra-Ethnic Relations.

During the visit, the two sides discussed the strengthening of political, social, economic, scientific and cultural relations between Russia and Georgia, Yegorov said.

Shevardnadze Meets With Ossetian, Russian Officials

LD2805163295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1455 GMT 28 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, May 28 (INTERFAX) — Georgian head of state Eduard Shevardnadze on Saturday [27 May] met in Tbilisi the president of the Russian republic of North Ossetia, Akhsarbek Galazov, to discuss ways to settle a prolonged conflict between Georgia and its autonomous region of South Ossetia.

Galazov, a member of a visiting Russian delegation, said after the talks that they "have had great importance."

"We have agreed to form a joint group of experts who would prepare direct negotiations between the conflicting sides about a broad political settlement, including such matters as the disarmament of illegal armed formations, the return of refugees and the solution of economic problems in South Ossetia," Galazov said.

The same day Shevardnadze had a meeting behind closed doors with delegation leader Nikolay Yegorov, Russian deputy premier and minister of nationalities and regional policy, a spokesman for the Georgian leader told INTERFAX.

Official sources who asked not to be identified told INTERFAX Georgia was currently making simultaneous efforts to settle its conflicts with South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Next month Tbilisi is expected to have direct talks with South Ossetian leaders, the sources said.

Shevardnadze 'Satisfied' With Minsk CIS Summit

LD2705162195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1310 GMT 27 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tbilisi, May 27 (INTERFAX) — Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze told correspondents in Tbilisi on Friday [26 May] he is satisfied with results of the Minsk Commonwealth summit.

In his words, "there are certain forces in Tbilisi which think we should not have agreed to prolong the mandate of Russian peace-makers in Abkhazia, but I think that the decision taken in Minsk is correct." He stressed "the mandate will have a qualitatively new content and assign the provision of guaranteed safe return of refugees to Abkhazia as the main task for the peacemakers."

According to Shevardnadze, Georgian Defence Minister Varden Nadibaidze will soon arrive in Moscow to specify the mandate details. Together with Pavel Grachev and commander of Russian peace-makers in Abkhazia Vasiliy Yakushev, he will elaborate plans for the peacemaking forces, said Shevardnadze.

Shevardnadze on Economy, CIS Summit

LD2905153695 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0503 GMT 29 May 95

[Interview with Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze by correspondent Nato Oniani in Tbilisi; monitored in progress — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Shevardnadze] ...Now, the developments in the economy. The pace of the political and economic life of the republic was undoubtedly determined by Georgia's Independence Day celebrations and the Minsk meeting of the CIS leaders and heads of governments. I have started with this issue because we signed very significant documents there with regard to the setting up of a new economic structure of the Commonwealth. It is natural that Georgia's interests are considered in them, too.

A relative stabilization of the Georgian coupon, an increase in the pace of privatization and overall distribution of vouchers, steps taken toward the creation of a favorable climate for investments, as well as the attainment of trust and support from international financial organizations are the fundamentals required for implementing the process of restoring the country's economy. The strengthening of independence is accompanied by the expansion and enhancement of integration with the surrounding world. This was the main feature of the Minsk CIS summit, which decided to set up an interstate currency committee. This will significantly simplify transactions between the CIS countries, thus securing convertibility of national currencies.

We are speaking about the CIS now. The time will come when we will also speak about merging with European structures and the common economic space within the range of the CIS, then within the range of Europe and later within a wider range. [passage omitted]

While defining the range of the republic's budget together with the IMF mission, it was decided to allot additional expenses for certain projects by allocating appropriate funds.

Funding was opened in May on the basis of loans granted by the IMF and the World Bank for projects like major repairs and restoration work within the energy complex. This is an urgent aid to Sakenergo [Georgian power production and consumption department] prior to receiving loans promised by Germany and the Eurobank. [sentence as heard] This was an unavoidable measure in order to get better prepared for the winter season. Certain funds have been sought for building the Akhaltsikhe customs office and rebuilding a section of the Turkey-Georgia highway, as well as modernizing Tbilisi airport. The latter work is planned to be funded by the Eurobank but we had to start work before the funds have been received. The modernization of Tbilisi airport is scheduled to be completed in January or February 1996. We will have an airport meeting the requirements of all international standards. [passage omitted]

With the summer approaching our agriculture will face even more strain. We have had an awful drought this spring. There has been no rain in some areas of Kakheti and Kartli regions for several months. Because of the drought, grain and sunflower crops are practically perishing. In this situation it is highly important to run proper irrigational systems and we all have to do everything to somehow save the crops.

[Oniani] The past week has been quite a busy one, full of visits. In fact, many important visitors arrived one after another. The Shalikashvili brothers arrived, a Russian delegation headed by Nikolay Yegorov, the minister for nationalities affairs and regional policy was here. It should be emphasized that the delegation included the North Ossetian President [Akhsarbek] Galazov. Oscar Lafontain [prime minister of Saarland, Germany] also arrived in connection with the 20th anniversary of friendship between Georgia and Saarland.

[Shevardnadze] I have already spoken about John Shalikashvili's visit. This was a very pleasant occasion for Georgia. It was pleasant that he arrived here not only as an outstanding military leader of a great country but also as a descendant of the Georgians who had to leave their motherland and had no possibility of coming back. U.S.-Georgian cooperation in building the Georgian Armed Forces seems quite promising, of course given that the cooperation with Russia is a fundamental factor in building the Georgian Army. We have a complete understanding in respect of this issue with Shalikashvili and representatives of other countries.

[Oniani] Shalikashvili said that nothing could be achieved by fighting against Russia.

[Shevardnadze] He said a witty phrase: We want partnership and cooperation for peace not against Russia but together with Russia. Peace and partnership together with Russia. This is a realistic and right stance.

[Oniani] It was also interesting when Shalikashvili gave a positive assessment to the steps our authorities took in relations with Russia, including the issue of military bases. It should be regarded as rather significant when this is said by our own flesh and blood, who at the same time is one of the most outstanding military figures in the United States, should it not?

[Shevardnadze] I have had meetings with Mr. Shalikashvili before, too, but this time I had an opportunity to conduct more fundamental talks with him and I was impressed by him. He is a man of smart intelligence, a professional of the highest grade, and a figure possessing the ability of sober analysis. While speaking about our relations with Russia, including military cooperation, Russian bases, and so on, he proceeds from the analysis of the data he possesses. He is well aware of what Georgia can attain in other regions and what degree of cooperation with Russia will provide it with an opportunity to build an army and strengthen its defensive abilities.

As for the visits by Yegorov, Galazov, and Kharitonov — it happens that we rarely mention the latter — he is the head of Krasnodar territory administration, Yevgeniy Kharitonov, with whom I had a very good meeting — the visit by such an official and highly authoritative delegation was primarily stipulated and its significance was determined by a common need to set up a common stand in respect of common Caucasian problems. The dialogue demonstrated that Russia and the Caucasus possess a unique opportunity to settle conflicts very soon — I mean conflicts in Georgia, I mean other conflicts in Transcaucasia, I mean conflicts in the North Caucasus — and achieve overall stability in the Caucasus as soon as possible. All of us, all the states of Transcaucasia and, indeed, Russia, are concerned with this. Russia and the Caucasus also have an opportunity to secure the restoration of the historically traditional ties for common benefits of the whole region. We spoke about this comprehensively and in detail.

A lot of interesting and extremely important things were said with regard to settling the Abkhazian conflict and the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. I welcomed Akhsarbek Galazov's proposition to hold a Caucasian dialogue. His idea is that the Caucasian leaders must hold a meeting, of course with Russia's active participation. I also welcomed the idea to hold the meeting in Vladikavkaz [North Ossetia] or elsewhere, although I think Vladikavkaz is acceptable as a venue. I have already appealed to my counterparts to transform this issue from the subject under discussion to a real task. [passage omitted]

[Oniani] A regular meeting of the CIS leaders and heads of governments was held in Minsk last week. The leaders made a joint statement on Abkhazia and the peacekeeping forces had their mandate renewed. During your TV interview you recalled a phrase said at the summit: Russians as well as Georgians are concerned by and tired of the burden of this unsettled conflict, meaning the Abkhazian conflict, and, since all required conditions do exist, the process of settling it should be completed this year. How real do you think this is? Certain pessimistic rumors have spread in Tbilisi. Despite the fact that the meeting was attended only by the heads of states and maybe a few other persons — we journalists were not allowed to attend, as usual — a know-all Tbilisi found out that you had come back from Minsk in a very low mood and extremely dissatisfied.

[Shevardnadze] I do not think we have grounds for dissatisfaction this time. I have already said and would like to reiterate that the decision to take our seats and represent Georgia in Minsk and then celebrate the Independence Day properly was right.

The Minsk meeting was yet another significant stage in settling the Abkhazian conflict. A unanimous assessment of the situation by the heads of states, I mean the statement you have mentioned, their peremptory stance in support of Georgia, as well as the renewal of the mandate of the peacekeeping forces inspires big hopes. [Defense Minister Vardiko] Nadibaidze is going to Moscow today to participate in drawing up a detailed action plan for the peacekeeping forces on the basis of the mandate given to them. This should produce an immediate effect. [passage omitted]

[Oniani] Speaking about Independence Day at your meeting with the Russian delegation, you said that on 26 May you felt you were in Georgia for the first time since you had arrived here three years before. Indeed, this 26 May was remarkable and different from those in previous years. A really superb military parade was held, the Tbilisi spring festival with shows, movies, and concerts is under way. The city authorities have presented the citizens with really great festivities. It should be indicated that the celebrations of this 26 May seemed to be a dividing line between the past Georgia and the Georgia that begins its new life after 26 May.

A lot has changed in recent years. The crime situation has stabilized and the economic situation has stabilized. All this is relative of course. We saw the people who rose above the hardships. It is one thing when something is occurring in the economy and another thing when a human being feels it directly and experiences spiritual freedom.

[Shevardnadze] You and the radio listeners may remember my saying that the current year should become a crucial year, a turning point. I believe that this 26 May has demonstrated that the process of turning has began. It has been rightly said that Georgia is returning to its own self. [passage omitted]

My words that I felt I was in Georgia for the first time were not accidental because I saw that Georgians — and not only Georgians but also representatives of all ethnic groups residing in Georgia — were returning to their real self, to a Georgian nature, to a Georgian optimism. [passage omitted]

Unfortunately, television could not cover all the events of the festivities as they deserved. [passage omitted] We have to help Georgian TV. Georgian TV is devastated and almost ruined. We have not been able to do much about it so far. I believe my duty is to secure the Georgian authorities to render very serious help to Georgian TV. I will end my talk with radio listeners at this point.

[Oniani] Thank you. You have been listening to Eduard Shevardnadze, the chairman of the Georgian Parliament and head of state.

Georgia Accused of Hampering Refugees Return

LD2905212095 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 1700 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abkhaz radio reports that Vladislav Ardzinba told journalists at a news conference that the return of refugees to Abkhazia has already started, and that approximately 1,500 people, who had not participated in combat actions, returned home. He added that the Georgian side was hampering this process by committing subversive and terrorist acts in Gali District. No comment, as the saying goes.

Abkhazia Protests Plan to Close Ports

LD2605183195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1647 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 26 (ITAR-TASS) — The Abkhazian government has launched a protest to Georgia in connection with the recent Georgian resolution to close Abkhazian sea ports, including that in Sukhumi.

A statement of the Abkhazian leadership circulated here today says that this resolution interferes in internal affairs of Abkhazia. "The resolution is juridically invalid bearing in mind the Republic of Abkhazia and the Republic of Georgia do not have political-legal relations and Georgian jurisdiction is not spread on Abkhazian territory," says the statement.

A resolution of the Georgian government to close Abkhazian sea ports for international transportation was adopted on May 24 in the light of the grave crime situation in the whole Caucasian region which allegedly allows in mercenaries, arms and drugs and creates a threat to state security and vital interests of Georgia and neighbouring states.

The Abkhazian statement notes that the outer borders of Abkhazia are being controlled by Russian border guards under conditions of economic blockage, including that on sea. The border guards have not registered a single case of border trespassing by mercenaries or smuggling of arms and drugs via Abkhazian ports. The Abkhazian situation is stable while terrorist acts and economic acts of sabotage have become more frequent in Georgia to pose a threat to national security of neighbouring nations, says the statement.

Estonia

Meri Says Relations With Ukraine 'Very Good'

LD2605200195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1738 GMT 26 May 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy, and edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Estonian President Lennart Meri has called Ukraine one of the key European states.

Speaking about the results of Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma's visit to Estonia at a news conference in Tallinn on Thursday [25 May], he said he was satisfied with Ukraine's concept of European security.

"We are satisfied that Ukraine characterizes its neutrality as active," Meri said.

"Ukraine intends to step up its relations with NATO and regards the North Atlantic alliance as one of the stabilizing factors," he said.

The political and economic aspects of the two countries' relations are "closely interconnected," the Estonian leader said.

He also thanked "Ukrainian organizations" which "contributed to shaping public opinion" that influenced the decision to withdraw ex-Soviet troops from Estonia.

Kuchma, asked about the significance of joint Ukrainian-U.S. military exercises that are currently in progress in Ukraine's Lvov Region, said: "Ukraine is ready to cooperate in the same way with any state." "The more there are of such exercises there more trust there will be," he added.

Estonian Prime Minister Tiit Vahi has described the atmosphere in Ukrainian-Estonian relations as "very good." "There are no serious problems in our relations," he told Ukrainian reporters. There are some technical problems, which will be solved "owing to the mutual desire of both sides," he said.

The premier called a proposal for an economic union of Black Sea countries and Baltic Council member states "interesting," but added that "it would be appropriate not to make any big plans so far."

Asked by INTERFAX to compare Estonia's relations with Ukraine to those with Russia, Vahi answered: "Russia unfortunately is showing no desire to liberalize its foreign policy towards Estonia." Estonia has practically removed all customs barriers, but "we are not satisfied with the corresponding (Russian) regime in regard to Estonia," he said.

Prime Minister Vahi Meets Latvian Counterpart

LD2605141395 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1200 GMT 26 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] First, about the meeting between Prime Minister Tiit Vahi and Latvian Prime Minister Maris Gailis, which has begun in Parnu. The government's press adviser, Mararika Saarna-Siimann, reports on how the meeting is progressing.

[Saarna-Siimann] The meeting began in a friendly and matter-of-fact manner. After a one-on-one chat between the prime ministers which lasted for about half an hour, the delegations began their talks. The subjects put forward for discussion are as follows: the issues of the Baltic customs union, customs and border cooperation between the two countries, and Via Baltica motorway.

In contrast to Estonia, Latvia still has tariffs for its farm produce but a position has now been adopted whereby the tariffs will be phased out in the course of the next six years. That is why Latvian Prime Minister Gailis was interested in the new Estonian Government's farming policy. Prime Minister Vahi stated that Estonia abolished its customs barriers in 1992 and there is no intention to introduce any restrictions. Estonia is also seeking opportunities for liberalizing trade with Latvia. The Estonian position is as follows: It would be wise to decide that there is free trade between us; and if Latvia has a desire to introduce temporary restrictions in respect of any one group of goods, then an agreement could be reached on that. However, the general principle should be that we are moving toward a free trade agreement.

Customs problems were also discussed. A cooperation agreement between the respective customs services was signed on 30 August 1994 but the agreement is stuck in the Latvian Parliament. This agreement would smooth cooperation between the two countries' customs considerably. It has also been decided to cooperate with respect to international customs agreements. It is good news for Estonian drivers that Latvia has decided to recognize the so-called green travel insurance card carried by citizens of the Baltic countries and the international carriers' TIR requirements.

The most recent issue discussed was the Via Baltica project. So far it has been declaratively stated that there is a need to support the project but now, or in the next few weeks, a government resolution to this end will also be adopted in Latvia. It is Latvia's wish that the three Baltic countries, as well as Poland and Finland, sign a memorandum which would allow a more serious approach to handling the project. Prime Minister Vahi emphasized that Estonia has always supported the Via

Baltica project and in Tallinn, for example, work is in progress on redesigning some roads to facilitate the project.

Cooperation with the European Union was also discussed. Latvia wants to see Estonia and Lithuania cooperate as much as possible, and before any structural dialogue meetings take place it is Latvia's wish that mutual activities are coordinated so that they are more effective .

Latvia

Baltic States Coordinate Cooperation With NATO

LD3005112795 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 0900 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Defense Ministries of the Baltic countries will be coordinating their individual programs for cooperation with NATO. This issue was discussed at the meeting of deputy defense ministers of the Baltic countries in Riga, which ended on Monday [29 May].

Colonel Jonas Gecas, the deputy minister of national defense of Lithuania, told a news conference in Riga that such coordination of activities is necessary for participation of all three countries in strategically important events that will be carried out in accordance with the Partnership for Peace program.

According to Janis Davidovics, the state secretary of the Latvian Ministry of Defense, meetings of the heads of defense planning departments of the three countries will be held prior to submitting individual programs to NATO. Meanwhile, strategic and global matters will be discussed by the Baltic Council of Ministers.

The representatives from the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian Defense Ministries noted that participation in the NATO Partnership for Peace program would become one of the priorities of defense policy for every Baltic country. There are plans to request additional financing for this purpose this year already, since no funds were allocated from state budgets of the Baltic countries for this purpose last year.

At the Riga meeting, the deputy defense ministers also discussed matters of military equipment. The Baltic countries plan to place joint orders for equipment with Western countries. This is believed to help Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia to get closer to NATO standards.

However, Lithuanian Deputy Defense Minister Gecas noted that it would not be right to regard all three countries as a single amalgamation since every country has its own legislation, history, traditions, and interests abroad.

Riga To Continue Borrowing Money From Abroad

LD2905183495

[FBIS Editorial Report] Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian at 1300 GMT on 29 May in a three-minute report says that to finance the budget deficit, the government last week received from the Bank of Latvia a 20 million lats loan.

A Latvian radio correspondent asks Inguna Sudraba, the deputy state secretary at the Ministry of Finance, to comment on the situation in the state budget.

Asked whether the recent loan means that wages and pensions will be paid in time at the beginning of June, Inguna Sudraba answers: "I want to hope very much that we will not delay the payment of wages and pensions. That is a priority in the expenditure, and we are trying to pay them first every day. But I cannot promise that all unpaid bills will be paid immediately — that is impossible. Some time will again be needed for that. And the only source of financing is that it is necessary to turn seriously to collecting the revenue part of the budget."

The correspondent also asks Sudraba about the future development of the situation if the revenue is not collected, and whether it is planned to ask the Bank of Latvia for more money in that case.

Sudraba answers: "No, we will not turn to the Bank of Latvia anymore. We have promised that we will not take such a step anymore and that that was only an emergency credit and that that was the only one and the last one this year. I think that we will have to look for the opportunity to borrow from international organizations — maybe money from the International Monetary Fund or other foreign loans — also trying to sell our securities to foreign investors sometime in midsummer, because in practice there are no more resources here in the country."

The reporter then asks Sudraba how long they are going to borrow and not put the revenue part of the budget in order.

Sudraba gives the following answer: "The law provides that this year we are borrowing 80 million [currency not specified]. That is for us to be able to pay for the last year's 40 million deficit and we have to finance this year's 40 million deficit."

Sudraba continues by saying that the current financial crises proves that there were no resources in the country to be able to borrow 80 million. That is one side of the problem. The causes of the problem are much deeper and more fundamental and cannot be tackled in a short period, because the Saeima deputies are not going to propose putting the revenue part of the budget in order or an increase of revenue in the budget.

Lithuania

Brazauskas on Border Deal With Latvia

LD3005101695 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 0900 GMT 30 May 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking at the Lithuanian Seimas about Lithuania's foreign policies today, President Algirdas Brazauskas concentrated on the issues concerning Lithuania's borders with neighboring countries.

After reviewing the border situation with Belarus, Poland, and Russia, President Brazauskas said that the land border with Latvia had been delimited already and it was ratified by parliaments of both countries. The Birzay Treaty — which delimited the land border between Lithuania and Latvia — had it that the maritime border would be delimited by a separate treaty. However, this process of delimiting the maritime border had reached a deadlock and therefore it became necessary to speed it up. A document — about which passions are being inflamed in the press and elsewhere — was signed in Maisiagala for this very reason, President Brazauskas said.

He maintained that the memorandum is not a binding document. Apart from other issues, the memorandum outlines that neither countries would be prospecting for oil in the disputed Baltic Sea shelf. According to Brazauskas, the memorandum will be a good stimulus for future activities in delimiting the maritime border as soon as possible.

The memorandum will not be made public during the course of negotiations, Brazauskas said.

The president denied the rumors on the resignations of the foreign minister [Povilas Gylys], minister of national defense [Linas Linkevicius], and director general of the State Security Department [Jurgis Jurgelis].

Minister on Negotiations on Sea Border

WS3005085195 Tallinn BNS in English 1640 GMT 29 May 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, May 29, BNS — The Latvian-Lithuanian sea border will be determined in accordance with a memorandum of understanding that was signed earlier this month, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys said Monday [29 May]. Gylys made the statement after a meeting with his Latvian counterpart Valdis Birkavs in Riga.

The Lithuanian minister met earlier in the day with Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis and Prime Minister Maris Gailis. The talks focused on the implementation of a memorandum on sea border that was signed by Latvian and Lithuanian leaders at their unofficial meeting May 20 in the Lithuanian town of Maisiagala.

In Riga, Gylys was accompanied by Deputy Minister Rimantas Sidlauskas, who heads the Lithuanian state commission for borders.

In remarks to BNS outside Birkavs' office, Gylys only said that further negotiations on sea border would be based on the agreements reached in Maisiagala. The Lithuanian minister refused to comment on the results of his meetings with Latvian leaders.

The Latvian Government's press service reported that the talks in Riga paved the way for new meetings between negotiators. The principles of the memorandum and processes of implementing them were also discussed, it added. According to Latvian Government sources, the memorandum signed in Maisiagala says that the sea border would be determined "as the center line between the variants proposed by the two sides."

The memorandum and the meeting, which had been held secret even from Lithuanian officials directly involved in border talks with Latvia, brought sharp criticism from opposition forces in Lithuania. According to unconfirmed reports, the leadership of the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry threatened to resign after the essence of the Maisiagala agreements became publicly known.

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